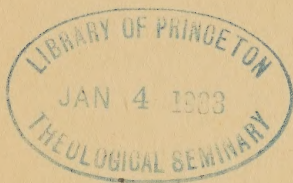


LENTEN SERMONS

WALTER B. GREENWAY, D.D.



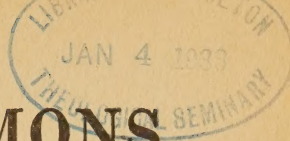


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LENTEN SERMONS

REV. WALTER B. GREENWAY





LENTEN SERMONS

MOUNTAIN PEAKS OF TRIAL
AND SUFFERING IN THE FORTY
DAYS OF OUR LORD'S LIFE
PRIOR TO THE RESURRECTION

BY

✓
REV. WALTER B. GREENWAY, D.D.

Pastor of Philadelphia's Largest Presbyterian Church

Author of "Passion Week Sermons"



HARVEY M. SHELLEY

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President of Muhlenberg College

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INTRODUCTION

I have read the proof sheets of Dr. Greenway's book, "Lenten Sermons," with great interest and I feel that I can endorse his sermons whole-heartedly.

It is a very encouraging and inspiriting fact to find a voice like that of the author of this book crying in the wilderness of modern doubt and of modern vagaries.

When so many trumpets give an uncertain sound, and when so many preachers sing the song of Babylon instead of the songs of Jerusalem, it is refreshing to hear a definite message about the Christ and His cross. We need today an inclusive gospel, one that embraces all of the truths of the New Testament, and one that finds its glory in Christ Crucified.

The series of sermons presented are so definitely evangelical and so fully taken out of the New Testament, and so altogether in keeping with its spirit and teaching, that men of all churches can read and be edified thru these messages. It is a book of this type which shows us how the essential gospel is a bond of unity between believers of every church who accept the faith once delivered to the saints. No more necessary messages are needed than those of the Cross, and none are truer to the record of Revelation, which devotes so many chapters in the gospel, and so much of the teachings of the apostles, to the Cross of Christ.

It is also a very notable sign of the closer approach of churches to find that more and more there is an observance of the season of Lent. Surely the time devoted prior to Easter to the contemplation and meditation upon the sufferings of Christ lends itself in a remarkable way to the growth in truth, and to the deepening of the spiritual life. I commend this book very heartily to all Christians as an aid in the larger knowledge and deeper appreciation of what Christ and His Cross mean for the children of men. May these messages find a wide circle of readers, and may they go forth to bless and inspire, so that there shall be an abundance of spiritual fruitage!

JOHN A. W. HAAS,
President of Muhlenberg College.

Allentown, Pa., December 10, 1926.

PART I
THE COMPASS OF THE CROSS

LENTEN SERMONS

CHAPTER I

THE COMPASS OF THE CROSS

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. . . . We preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—I Corinthians 1:18, 23, 24.

At this particular season, the Lenten season, attention is supposed to be directed to the cross in every known part of the world. At least five hundred million persons, by the observance of the Lenten season, will be reminded of the crucifixion on the cross. The whole atmosphere is saturated with the thought. To many the season may have become only a fad or fancy, a fashion, but even to the frivolous, worldly minded person there must come a recognition that the whole season points toward the cross of Christ. In accord with this prevalent idea and while the atmosphere is pregnant with the thought of the cross I will endeavor to speak to you for four successive Sabbaths on themes relating to the cross. Beginning today I will speak regarding "The Compass of the Cross"; next Sabbath morning on "The Comfort of the

Cross," and the following Sabbath on "The Conquest of the Cross," and on Easter Sabbath on "The Cross Conquered."

It is a human trait that things of great value, so commonly referred to, are allowed to lose their value and significance because of the generous and general use. We take the name cross on our tongues and use it readily, sometimes flippantly and carelessly, little discerning what it is we are handling so carelessly. To the man possessed of great quantities of diamonds a diamond to his mind would be insignificant. We are possessed of values greater than all the diamonds in the world, in that we possess the cross, and just for this reason we fail to recognize its true worth.

In order that we may the more appreciate the cross, on which the Christ was crucified, meaning of course the sacrifice thereon and not the wooden structure, I wish to call your attention to five distinct things relating to the cross on which the Christ was crucified.

1. *I wish to call your attention briefly to the meaning of the cross.* Its meaning can best be understood by observing the gradual development leading up to it. It was my lot to spend my childhood and youthful days in the valley between the Blue Ridge Mountain and the Smoky Mountain in Tennessee. One of the sights never to be forgotten was that of the sun rising over the mountains. First was the dawn, then the glare of light arising from beyond the mountain, then a rim of the sun, like the rim of a ball of fire, rearing above the mountain, then half the sun, then the whole sun in all its glory, brightening every nook and corner of the valley below the hills. In some such way as this the Son of Righteousness arose. The first ray

appearing beyond the mountain of sin is seen when God curses the serpent in the Garden, after the curse declaring that the sinner would eventually be saved—that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. The next advanced light is seen in Abel's sacrifice of blood, when first we have the idea of reconciling and atoning through the instrumentality of blood. The brighter ray shows itself when Isaac, with hands and feet tied, bows his neck on the altar with his father standing by, ax in hand, drawn ready to slay his own son, when a ram appears from without the bushes and a voice speaks advising the ram to be substituted for the son—a fit type of what was to come. The race was tied hand and foot by sin, bound as slaves, the executor of justice stood ready to slay, when God's son is substituted to be sacrificed instead in order to appease justice. Then later the matchless rays of light are seen in that beautiful description in the fifty-third Chapter of Isaiah. Then the sun shines forth in all its grandeur and glory when the Son of God came to Earth, lived a sinless life, taught the world its matchless lesson and cried upon the cross, "It is finished." What was finished? What does it all mean? It means that the sinner, such as we all are, is now reconciled to God. Justice has been satisfied. Reconciliation has been completed. What does that mean? An illustration will teach us the lesson of the meaning of the Cross as it relates to reconciliation and justification.

A young man married a beautiful girl and they had a happy little home in Kentucky. The young man's wife's father and her husband quarreled over business and then did not speak to each other for eighteen years. Children were born in this home, but their grandfather never came to see them, until

one day their mother was dying. A messenger was sent for the gray-haired father. He came. The son-in-law met him at the door, gave him welcome and led him to the bedside of the dying wife and daughter. She took the hand of her old father and the hand of her husband and put them together, smiled and died. I shall never forget the words of her oldest son, "Oh, it took the death of my dear mother to reconcile my father and my grandfather." Yes, it took the death of the Son of God to reconcile me to my Heavenly Father. God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

There is a word used eighty times in the Old Testament, but only once in our English version of the New Testament, which explains fully the meaning of the Cross. It is the word atonement—at-one-ment. That means that the cross removed every barrier and every difficulty and discord existing between God and man, and made us at-one with God. It means, as the Puritans were wont to say, that Jesus, the victim of the cross, was very God of very God, gave up his position as Son in celestial realms, came to a sin cursed earth, took upon himself the form of a servant, became obedient to the law, made in the likeness of men. (Notice the Scripture says, "made in the likeness of men," plural, not singular. He was not made in the likeness of an American, Englishman, Scotchman, German, Irishman or Frenchman—he was made in the likeness of men, all men—the blood of the whole human race coursed through his veins.) Thus condescending He became a criminal. Sin is disobedience. One disobeying law is a criminal. Christ took upon himself sin, which is disobedience of law, and thus became a criminal, that He might suffer the penalty of law violation. He knew no sin, He

took your sin, died for it; He took your crimes and suffered punishment for them on the cross. The cross then means that man is reconciled to God, that atonement has been made for sin, that we have access to God the Creator, and God the Father. This thought should convince us of the foolishness and the foolheartedness of frivolity at any time when we think of or refer to the cross. The verdict had gone forth—"The soul that sins shall die." "All we like sheep had gone astray, all had sinned and come short of the glory of God." As sinners we were violators of the law—criminals, and punishment was our just desert. At the cross Jesus took our punishment and set us free. Meditate on these things.

2. *The Necessity of the Cross.* While we have seen the meaning of the cross, I want to emphasize its meaning by declaring to you that the cross was an absolute necessity. Justice must be satisfied. God had said, "The soul that sins must die"—that's law. Justice before the law demands the full penalty before the law. Death was the penalty named for violation of the law. But God who is just, is also the God who is love. Justice demanded that someone pay the penalty of sin; Law demanded that a subject be provided to meet or bear that penalty. Only one without sin could carry the sins for others, for anyone with sin would deserve punishment on his own account and could not bear death for himself and for another. God furnished this sinless one—none other would satisfy. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son of Man be lifted up. We see the necessity of the cross first, in the holiness of God. God is holy; sin is unholy. Holiness resides in a holy being; sin resides in an unholy being. In order to bring the holy being

and the unholy being into harmonious contact sin must be destroyed in the unholy one. That means, someone must carry away that sin. Only a sinless one can do it. God furnishes that one.

When Israel was in the Wilderness, and the serpents were destroying them by the hundreds, they had neither doctor nor medicine, they could furnish nothing to alleviate the suffering, nor could they destroy the serpents doing the biting. God furnished the remedy in the brazen serpent. If these people when Moses said, "Look upon the serpent" had replied, "We cannot understand such a method or process," they never would have been saved. They were not asked to understand, they were asked to look and live. If Moses had placed that serpent on some high hill and had announced in the camp the necessity of going where they could see the uplifted serpent, those already being the weak ones could not have gone, they would have died in the camp. Moses erected the serpent in the camp. So God erected a cross, and on it sacrificed a man, His son, low enough and near enough for the weakest and poorest to approach, high enough and divine enough to attract the commendation of Heaven.

3. *The Motive of the Cross.* Back of what we have said concerning the meaning of the cross and the necessity of the cross lies a motive for the cross, that motive is best expressed in that "mountain peak" of Scripture, John 3:16, "God so loved . . . that He gave." This is the very thing that appeals to men. Hans Egede, the missionary to Greenland, preached for eight long years to the Greenlanders on the justice of God without having a single convert. As the text for his last or farewell sermon he chose the words, "I have worked for naught." On his return John Beck was sent to the

Greenlanders by the Moravian Church. His first text was John 3:16. At the close of the first sermon a chieftain asked him to repeat the text, and had him repeat it several times. Then he said, "That is a new kind of a God. Our gods are gods of hate, not love." The chieftain accepted Christ, became a Christian and led his whole tribe into Christianity. It is love back of the cross as a motive the world wants to hear about and that will influence the world to accept its purpose—a love that sees a need and desires to meet that need.

Prebendary Fox, whose ambition was to be a painter, decided to paint what he thought would be a masterpiece, his subject being a woman with a child in her bosom, out in a storm at night. As he painted the scenery and was painting the woman and the child his own feelings were affected, and he became much moved himself by what he saw in his own painting—a poor mother and her babe struggling through the storm seeking shelter. Finally he threw down his brush and said, "Would it not be better to help such struggling humanity than paint it?" He goes to Oxford, works his way through school, then goes to the slums in London, but wishing to go where the need was greatest he goes to East Africa and becomes the Bishop of Uganda. Love for suffering humanity prompted him to give his life for the thousands who owe their salvation to him in that black Uganda Belt. This illustrates but faintly the love that prompted Christ to give himself.

4. The Magnetism of the Cross. If the cross means an atonement, if it was a necessity which God provided for, and if back of it the motive was love, there must be in it a certain magnetism. That magnetism is best expressed in the literature of

Scripture, John 12:32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

In one of our college laboratories there is a great magnet that will lift two hundred pounds of iron. It is magnetized by electric currents passing through it. The cross of Christ is magnetized because of the current of love, sympathy and compassion which He manifests. If you were to ask the question why is the cross magnetic, why should it and does it draw men to itself, we would answer but partially when we say:

(a) Man is guilty of sin, carrying it as a burden, like Bunyan's pack, placed on Pilgrim's back, that he was unable to release until he came before the cross, there it rolled away and with it its guilt. We may forgive one who lies or murders, but the fact of their lie and murder remains. A governor may release prisoners, but the fact remains that they are criminals, and he only turns them loose on society. Christ not only releases from the sin that we have committed, but he destroys the guilt, and sends us forth free and regenerated beings.

(b) The fact that our human nature intuitively is turned to one who gives himself for others. Walter Reed discovered that yellow fever was not contagious, only infectious, carried by mosquitoes. A group of young men volunteered to make the test. One of the young men who was inoculated by the mosquito bite dies, but the people of New Orleans and Havana hailed this young man as a hero, in fact so does the medical profession. He gave himself for others. In that act is a magnet. Borromeo remained in Milan, when the town was ravaged with an awful epidemic of disease, giving himself for helping the poor, and later he was a victim of the disease himself. No name is more honored today

than that of Borromeo in the great cathedral of Milan. Because our sin and our guilt were abolished at the cross, and because our own nature voluntarily turns toward one who gives himself for others are two reasons why the cross attracts us and should attract to the extent that we yield to the one who was crucified thereon.

5. *The Power of the Cross.* If the cross means a reconciliation, a necessity which God met, a motive behind is love, which makes it a magnetism attracting men, what of its power? The word power comes from the Greek word "dynamis," which means dynamite. The cross is Christ's dynamite for destroying the foreign and useless in man and creating him free again. Reference to lives that are familiar, such as Jerry Macauley, Sam Hadley, Mel Trotter, and numerous others, such as the sketches portrayed in Harold Begbie's "Twice Born Men," will reveal for us extensively the power of the cross and the Christ thereon. Dr. Paton met the natives of the New Hebrides as cannibals, eating each other and all foreigners. After forty years he left them law-abiding, loving their fellows—the power of Christ. Egerton Young, missionary to the Cree Indians, tells of a chief who became converted. Prior to that time he had vowed to kill another chief, and the other one had vowed to kill him. In company with the missionary the two chiefs met. The Christian chief said to the other, "If I had not become a Christian I would have killed you—now I love you." The other chief later became a Christian—the power of the cross.

Countess Shunmelmán tells of speaking in Hamburg. When she mentioned Christ a hiss went over the audience, when she mentioned God they mocked,

when she spoke of Christianity they sneered, but when she quoted the Scripture that says "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin" and told of the death of Christ, they listened attentively—power of the Cross to attract.

It would be an impossibility to attempt to give a complete compass of the cross, suffice it for this occasion. We have seen its meaning, its motive, its necessity, its magnetism, and its power. A certain heathen ruler, who had become converted, when dying ordered that a cross be made and placed outside his door. When this had been done he ordered his servant to take him out and lay him on the cross in the position Christ lay on the cross, and as thus he lay dying he exclaimed, "He lifts, the Christ lifts," and died peaceably, being lifted into peace by the Christ.

CHAPTER II

THE COMFORT OF THE CROSS

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."—Colossians 1:19, 20.

Last Sabbath we spoke concerning "The Compass of the Cross," referring to the extent of the cross. After having seen the compass or extent of the cross, I venture there was a feeling of satisfaction and comfort that followed. We saw that the cross meant a reconciliation to God. We saw that it was a necessary thing and that God supplied the necessity. We saw that back of God's supplying that necessity in the person of his own Son, the one and only motive was love. That being the case, we agreed that the cross had great magnetism, and had in the past, is now, and will continue to exert, a great cleansing, purifying, regenerating power on the lives of men and women. Herein in itself is a great satisfaction and a wholesome comfort. However, I wish today to call your attention to other features concerning the cross that will produce even a larger feeling of satisfaction and comfort. The text announced really embodies everything the human heart and life desires, and it is only a truth with the Cross as a centre.

1. *The Liberty Given By the Cross.* Following closely the same line of thought as already

expressed, I call your attention to the fact that the Cross gives to a life a genuine form of liberty. We were, and are, all slaves, the Cross became our emancipator. Guizot in his "History of Civilization" admits the fact that every great advanced movement for the uplift of the human race has been started or centred in some great emancipator, lifting the race from some form of bondage. England hails her Wilberforce, America lauds her Lincoln and Wendell Phillips, because they were the means so to speak, of liberating from slavery great hordes of people. If this is right, then why is it that we do not hail or laud the Cross that emancipated, not any particular set or class of slaves, but that liberates or at least offers liberty to all men under the slavery of sin.

We have made a declaration that we have been and that we are all slaves to sin. That is voiced in Paul's declaration, "We have all sinned and come short of the Glory of God," or that other Scriptural truth, that "there is none perfect, no not one." Then there is something apart from ourselves that extracts from us continuously a certain amount of service or servitude. In this way we are servants to sin, and whatever we are servant to we are slaves to. We that live in the present generation are slaves in three distinct ways:—

(a) *We are born slaves.* The children of slaves in the days of slavery in our own country, were also slaves. They were slaves because they were born in slavery. We are slaves to sin because our parents are slaves to sin. We have been born in the slavery of sin. While we believe that men are so born as sinners, we do not believe that any will be condemned because of this original sin, for which we are not responsible. It is only for the overt acts

of sin, or the meditated acts of sin, that we shall be held accountable. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ all shall live." In other words, if we inherit sin because we are born of sinful parents through Adam, we shall inherit a righteous cleansing for this original sin through Christ.

(b) *We are also made slaves by capture.* We allow that original sin right-of-way until it has grown to an overt act and becomes our master. Some are captured by an utter regard for the wealth of the world and become slaves to the most abject form of tyranny. Dr. Waite, the young dentist, now on trial in New York for the murder of his wife's parents, has revealed to what extent one can become the slave to wealth. He has confessed that he perpetrated his horrible deeds simply that he might have money. Others are captured to the same extent by pleasure, passions and appetites. When we become captives to sin, just like the slave of olden times, we are deprived of the truly valuable assets of life. The slave was limited to, and deprived of much that makes life enjoyable, just so the sinner deprives himself and is deprived of much that is enjoyable in this life and renders himself inefficient.

During the Civil War a small gun-boat was anchored off a New England Harbor. A troop of the enemy on shore, observed the boat anchored in the harbor. Under cover of night they rowed out to the boat and securely placed a wedge alongside the rudder. Next day they opened fire on the gun-boat. She put on steam and tried to put to sea, but found that the rudder would not work, and it floundered in the bay in a helpless condition, rendered helpless and a captive because a single little wedge was driven down the side of the rudder. A small wedge of sin will thus enslave human life, making it im-

possible for us to do or be what God has intended, and rendering us servant to our enemy, sin.

(c) *How liberty from this slavery is obtained.* We have been speaking of the darker side of the picture—the slavery from which we are to be freed. Now we speak of the emancipation brought about by the Cross. As fit an illustration as I have seen or heard is the story of an emancipation, told by Geo. C. Lorimer, in his drama entitled “The Master of Millions.” The character called Dawney MacIllivary is arrested, placed in prison for a crime, of which he is not guilty. He has been the sole support for a widowed mother and a baby sister. They are in need, now that his source of supply has been cut off. He has an intimate friend in the person of a young man by the name of Pinkey Sleutch. Pinkey Sleutch visits Dawney in the prison cell, relates the suffering of his mother and sister, then suggests that he stay in prison and Dawney go out to support his mother. They understand the prison guard would not agree to this. Whereupon, Pinkey Sleutch suggests that they exchange clothes in the cell. This was done. Pinkey Sleutch, dressed as Dawney MacIllivary, remains in prison, and Dawney MacIllivary, dressed as Pinkey Sleutch, goes out to his freedom and to the support of those dependent upon him. That is what Christ has done for us. A God, exchanged dress, put on the dress of a human body, came to this earth, went into the prison, even the prison of death on the cross, to set us free, and the liberty that Dawney MacIllivary had of being freed from the prison and of having access again to his loved ones, is only a minimum picture of the liberty that comes to us when liberated from sin by the Cross of Christ. This supposition is being questioned today in certain circles, a circle we might add that

is in slavery to sin. It is being questioned on the basis that it would not be right, even moral, for one to so substitute himself, as in the case of the two young Scotchmen, referred to, or, as in the case particularly of Christ. Such a criticism is absolutely false to the customs and practices of life, and not condemned in anything else. I have seen a mother with her sick child in her arms, walking in the park on a hot summer's evening, looking down into its face. It would be hard to tell which suffered most, the mother or the child. You tell me it was wrong and immoral for that mother to suffer for her child—never!

In the little churchyard cemetery, in a certain village in Germany, you will find a little bunch of flowers, brought every morning every day in the year, and laid on that grave. The grave is that of the old village blacksmith, who while working at his shop, beside the village street, saw a great dog coming down the street in a rage of madness, frothing at the mouth, snapping at everything in reach. Outside of his shop a large group of children were playing. He knew the dog would bite the children, and if not tearing them to pieces on the spot would infect them with a poison that would lead to death by hydrophobia. Not having time to bring the children into his shop for protection, he jumps to the street, seizes the snapping dog and wrestles with him until the dog is killed, but in the conflict the blacksmith is bitten. He feels a peculiar sensation coming over him at once, realizes that he was poisoned and would soon become as furious as the dog that he had killed. He places a chain about his wrist, welds the link around his own anvil, and thus chained to his own anvil, waited the awful moment to come. Here he remains until he dies

of the active type of hydrophobia. The citizens of the community apportioned a day when each child shall place a flower on his grave. Was it wrong for the blacksmith to suffer for the children? It would be unsafe to make that statement in that village. We do not question the right of others to suffer that another may be liberated and freed. Only is it done in the case of the Cross, and only is it done by those who are subservient to sin. Suffice it now, that we have seen the liberty granted by the Cross.

2. It is a comfort to know the kind of life the Cross develops. It is not only a comforting thought to realize, as we have been suggesting, that we are liberated from a life of sin by the Cross, but it is also satisfying and comforting to know that after such liberation the Cross develops the highest type of life known among men.

(a) *It takes the selfish life that thinks only of self and develops it until it recognizes in another one as valuable in the sight of God as himself.* In the Museum, at St. Petersburg, Russia, is a bust of Napoleon Bonaparte, which he had caused to be made himself, and carried with him on his campaign in Russia, and which he intended to place in the square at St. Petersburg to commemorate himself and his power. Driven back with an almost tragic loss from Moscow, he never placed the bust. He thus intended to perpetuate himself. That is the characteristic of man under the bondage of sin. When freed from sin the man does not think only of perpetuating himself, but also others.

(b) The Cross, liberating from sin, and among other sins none greater than selfishness, *it develops a life of pity, sympathy, helpfulness and love,*—just those traits and qualities we love in others. A gentleman, passing a store, found the owner outside one

cold morning trying to rub the frost from off the window. It was a hard task and he was making little progress. The passerby suggested that a better way would be to build a warm fire inside the store and the fire within would melt the frost without. This was done with satisfactory results. So the fact, or the truth, of the Cross inside our lives destroys the frost of selfishness, of hatred and kindred kind, and lets a life of pity, helpfulness, sympathy and love manifest itself to those with whom we come in contact.

(c) It is a great comfort to most of us to feel that *there is something to assist us in gaining control over ourselves—our appetites and passions.* We have come, quite right, to look upon self-control as being a wonderful virtue. There is nothing so effectual in producing self-control as the truths of Scripture, centering around the great truth of the Cross. There is a legend that fitly illustrates the thought. A young lady is advised that there is a certain fountain of beauty; looking into said fountain one can see the beauty it is possible for one to obtain, then turning to look into a mirror one sees herself as she is, and notes a vast difference. She is advised that by bathing in the fountain of beauty, under certain conditions, she will obtain that beautiful life mirrored in its waters. She decides to bathe in the fountain of beauty, whereupon a mysterious person appears, with a wand of silver touches her, and advises her to return home and learn to control her temper for six months and then return for the bath. This she does. When she returns another mysterious person, with a wand of gold appears, touches her, tells her to return home, cease her life of idleness and employ her time in useful, helpful service and then return for the bath.

This she does. Again she returns to the fountain. Another mysterious person approaches with a wand of gold, silver, and diamonds, touches her, advises her to return home and for six months to think less of herself and more of others, and then return. This she does. When she has returned the three mysterious persons greet her, usher her to the fountain of beauty and tell her to look within. She looks and beholds a beautiful face, then she turns to look into the mirror, and lo, the reflection of her real self in the mirror is the same as that reflected in the fountain of beauty she so much desired. Thus the desired beauty of life was obtained by self-control, following the central truths that cluster about the cross, controlling temper, engaging in some useful, helpful work, thinking of others.

In a more practical way Russell Sage, the great financier of recent years, commends the same truth. A young man, who was destitute, came to Mr. Sage, being of good breeding and training, and asked Mr. Sage for a loan of some money on which to begin business. Mr. Sage asked him, "Do you drink?" The young man replied that he did. Then Mr. Sage said, "Go, cease your drinking for one year. Then come back and see me." The young man complied with his order, and at the end of the year he returned. Mr. Sage asked, "Do you gamble?" He replied, "Yes." Whereupon he was advised to cease his gambling for a year and then return. He did so, hopeful of getting a good round sum of money. Mr. Sage asked, "Do you keep good company—upright company?" The young man replied, "No." Then, said Mr. Sage, "Go, keep good company for a year and then come back and see me." The young man went and did as Mr. Sage advised, but he never returned to see Mr. Sage. A friend that knew about

it, asked him why he did not return at the end of the third year, having met Mr. Sage's conditions, to stop drinking, to stop gambling, and keep away from bad company. The young man replied, "It is not necessary for me to apply to Mr. Sage for money on which to begin business—I have money of my own." Thus by destroying those things contrary to the teaching of the Cross, which is an indirect way of following the teaching of the Cross, this young man developed a self-control that proved beneficial.

So there is comfort to know that in the Cross of Christ, that you and I propose and purpose to follow, is the development of the best type of life.

3. There is comfort to know that *the Cross and its influence will never be destroyed*. Having been comforted with the thought that the Cross liberates from sin and that it develops the best type of life, another comfort to follow will be that that which produces these things that produce comfort will never be destroyed. Every attempt has met with failure. Herod tried to destroy it by killing the children. The Jews tried it by rejection, and the Romans by murder. Infidelic and heretical views in every century—all have failed. Julian, the Apostolic Emperor and ardent opposer of the Christ, expressed in his own admission of defeat the truth of the ages concerning the permanency of the Cross. Leading his forces out to battle with the Christian forces, he passed two humble Christians. Haughtily he said, "What is your Carpenter doing now?" The reply was, "Making a coffin for the Emperor, sir." In the battle that followed Julian is fatally wounded. As he fell, he said, "Thou hast conquered, Oh Galilean," and expired.

There may be some comfort in the fact that those who oppose Christ and the Gospel of the Cross have

always been and are always those who may be in a sense classed with a depraved or degraded class. Herod was a vicious tyrant. The Jews, while outwardly ceremoniously clean, were filthy within as a decayed carcass in a tomb. The Romans were as corrupt as uncontrolled passions could make. All through the centuries the opponents have been those who have been far from conquerable by any truth embodied in Christianity. It is a noteworthy fact to this day that those who criticize one who plainly and earnestly proclaims the truths of the Cross are never among those who are found at Church at both services on the Sabbath and at the Mid-week Prayer Meeting. They are never found among those who contribute one-tenth, the Scriptural amount required, to the causes of the Lord. They are never found among those whom we could classify as consecrated, conscientious Christian workers, but are found among those to whom religion has only become a mere matter of form which is practiced as a salve to conscience, or those who are enrolled simply because the highest type of decency is found among those enrolled in the Christian Church. So we are comforted to know that the Cross will never be destroyed, because the type of its opponents is not a type that will suggest victory for them.

4. *It gives comfort because it gives peace.* We are comforted in the liberty the Cross gives us from sin, in the developed life it produces, in the fact that it is a permanent instrument, used of God for the best interest of man, and last but not least, we are comforted in the peace it gives for the life we are living now and for the moment we are about to enter another life. It assures us that by being faithful to its teaching our imperfection will be corrected and made perfect. In Washington,

D. C., there is a department known as Redemption Department. In this department any owner of a mutilated or dilapidated bill can have it exchanged for a perfectly new one. Old, torn, soiled, mutilated bills are exchanged and new ones given in their place. The Cross is the Redemption Department of life, where our torn, soiled, mutilated lives are exchanged for a life of purity and perfection. What peace there is in that thought! It is stated that when Palmer, the missionary, was condemned to die, in the days of Queen Mary, he was readmonished in a beautiful speech, saying that it was a shame to be destroyed in the flower of youth. He replied, "Sir, I am going to get spring flowers that never fade," and then addressing his comrades said, "Be faithful," and as the flames were enveloping his body he calls to those standing by saying, "For these coals I shall get pearls." Nothing but the Cross can produce a peace like that.

The old Prophet has said that the life of the sinner is like the troubled sea, never at rest, never at peace. The Apostle has said that the followers of the Cross have a peace that passeth understanding. The Christian's peace is like a river. Rising like a little brook among the mosses of the lone green hill, by and by it leaps as a rugged cataract. Then it flows along the fair valley, where the deer wanders and the child loves to play. With the hum of pleasant music the brook turns the village mill, then sports, as it leaps over its pebbly bed. Now that streamlet has become a river and bears upon its bosom many a craft. Then its bosom swells, and bridges with noble arches are thrown across it. Finally it becomes an arm of old father ocean, plowing its water forces into the mighty seas. The river

abides the lapse of time, it is no transient morning cloud, it is permanent,—it seems to say in the language of the poet, “Men may come, men may go, but I flow on forever.” Such is the peace of the Christian. He has always reason for comfort. He has a comfort that abides always the same, a peace never changing, however much environment may change. Go to the river for your lesson concerning a Christian’s peace. You find it flowing in its own bed in the thick of night as well as in the clear, bright day. You may see its waves in the hour of tempest by the lightning’s flash, as well as in the day of calm, when the sun shines bright. The river is always in its place. And even thus, come night, come day, come sickness, come health, come what will, the peace of God that passeth all understanding will keep the Christian’s mind, through Jesus Christ. As the Christian traverses, like a river, the rich lowlands of fellowship of Christ in his sufferings and conformity to his death, he has known the peace which was our Master’s precious legacy. He will cast all his care upon God, who careth for him. True peace will increase until it melts into the eternal rest of a beautiful vision, where not a wave of trouble rolls across his peaceful breast.

CHAPTER III

THE CONQUEST OF THE CROSS

"To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil."—I John 3:8.

It is to be hoped that our study of the cross for the past two Sundays has increased our appreciation for it. We have been reminded that its meaning is reconciliation with God. We have had our attention called to the fact that from the very nature of the case the Cross was necessary, and a necessity beyond the possibility of man to meet. Man as a sinner or criminal could not die for sin and crime, except for himself—not for another. The substitute must be given from outside the human race. God met this necessity in his Son, which substitution for the penalty was paid at the Cross. Its magnetic influence attracts all men because it liberates from the power of sin, and because it has proven itself indestructible and guarantees a life of development better than the world has seen elsewhere. And last, but not least, gives a peace which man has been unable to find anywhere else. Today we are to consider briefly the conquest the cross has effected, is capable of effecting, or may effect. When we speak of a conquest we are at once reminded of a conqueror, and when we think of a conqueror we are conscious that an enemy has been overcome. We are agreed that the greater the victory the greater the conqueror, and the greater the conquest effected.

The stronger the enemy overcome the greater is the victory and the victor.

1. We shall call attention, first to *the enemy overcome by the Cross*. We have a very complete description of this enemy in the names applied. In the names given to the enemy of the Cross we get a fair estimate of his character, of his strength, and strategy. The enemy is designated by five names.

(a) *He is called a dragon*. A dragon signifies a monstrosity, something entirely unlike anything human or angelic. That the father of sin is indeed a monstrosity can be seen in the effect it produces upon those who yield to it. Here is a beautiful young girl, of eighteen years, finished High School, the pride of the home, the very symbol of innocence. Ten years later we find her filthy, dirty, haggard—a wretch. She has yielded to sin. That which was once beautiful is now a monstrosity, repulsive in appearance. Look at the lives of those saturated in sin and see the haggard, worn appearance, and we agree that the enemy of the Cross when called a dragon is indeed a monster, and by associating one begins to assume the same appearance.

(b) *He is called a serpent*, which is the symbol of cunning and slyness; not a monstrosity, but diplomatic, polite, courteous, a will-o'-the-wisp, leading to destruction. Very like that which is good, but whose end is ruin. A toadstool and a mushroom grow side by side—one is poison, one is wholesome. Only the trained eye can detect which is which. So sin, so cunningly enters the life of men. One may dress in the robe of morality, appear like a Christian, but his purpose may be to drag down the Christian. Duck shooters use decoy ducks. They release dummy ducks and let them float on the water. Other ducks flying over, see them, thinking them

companions light in the water and are shot by the shooter. So sin uses decoys, especially with the young men and the young women, making that which is dangerous appear as safe.

(c) *He is called Satan*, which simply means an adversary—one who offers opposition to all kinds of good. First, in a dignified manner. Some of the greatest oppositions to Christianity and the Christian Church are being offered in a dignified way today. Scholarly persons are teaching that science discredits the truths of God's Word. They overlook the fact, however, that the world's recognized greatest scientists, such as Agassiz and Newton and others, were Christians, and found no conflict between science and Scripture. Politicians doing things for policy sake, hydra-headed sects basking under the cover of religion—dignified, courteous, polite, are opposing forces to the Cross. In this rank may be found the Unitarians, Universalists, Mormons and the like.

(d) *He is called the Devil*, which means the slanderer, one who deceives and condemns. This we usually see on every side,—apparently intelligent folks condemning the Church and Christian constituency, breaking down the barriers erected by the Cross, lowering the standard of honesty, Sabbath observance, Church loyalty, ridiculing as behind the time those who remain true.

(e) *He is called the accuser*. This we have experienced is a true title. He accuses us before the world of being insincere, unfaithful, of making statements which are not properly quoted by him. We have only to remember that the testimony of the witness is considered in proportion to the character of the witness. We need have no fear of any

testimony the devil or his angels may give concerning us, for Scripture says that he is a liar, and even the father of liars.

Now we have in these five significant names the real strength and force of the enemy of the Cross. Has the Cross overcome these? Is the Cross capable of overcoming this force of the enemy? We have only to read the declaration of Revelation 12:11, to answer our question—"They overcame by the blood of the Lamb." However much the enemy may have taken possession of our lives, the blood of the Cross drowns the enemy and conquers our life for God.

A fit illustration of the extent of the victory of the Cross over this enemy is seen in the life of Valentine Burk. While sitting in his cell in the jail at St. Louis, reading a paper, his eyes fell upon the headline, "How a Jailer was caught." He was wishing that every jailer might be caught. He proceeded to read and found that it was an account of Moody's service and sermon on the Philippian Jailer. Reading the sermon he had a vision of himself, surrendered to Christ, became a Christian. Later he was given his freedom. He went about proclaiming himself a Christian. His past record was notorious. No one would trust him, but he remained true. The Chief of Police appointed a detective to follow him, thinking that his claim on Christianity was a fake. After weeks, the Chief of Police sent for Burk. He came at once. Whereupon the Chief said, "Burk, your record is a notorious one. We thought you were faking. We have been watching you for weeks, and we find all the old forces of evil are gone out of your life. You are what you say. Now this Department wishes to secure for you a position and help start you in life." A position was secured in a bank, where he was

trusted. He became an influential Christian man, and a forcible Christian worker, and died honored and respected of all who knew him. A great conquest of the cross over the forces of evil.

What has been done in this individual capacity has been done in a wider, social and national capacity. The influence of the Cross has forever put an end to superstitious customs and practices, relieving the Chinese women of her bandaged feet, the Turkish women of her hideous veil, the Hindu mother of the cruel sacrifice of her children. The enemy of the Cross is that force producing a Mohammedan, Turk, Hindu, a pagan people wherever found. When conquered by the Cross, as they have been and are being conquered today and when the Christ comes in, the curse is removed and civilization is established.

2. *The conquest over the thirst of the soul.* The soul cries out for hunger, longing for something beyond the world. The bread cry is a pitiful cry. If you have read the description of the bread riots in "John Halifax Gentleman" you will never forget it—hungry people crying for bread. The soul's cry for bread is pathetic and tragic. As I walk up and down in our community I hear this cry for bread. Across the street is a line of young people in front of the theatre-window, trying to get a ticket. They are there for the cry of their souls for bread, which they think they can satisfy with the husk that swine would eat. Yonder are men and women, drinking themselves drunk. It is a cry of hunger, not so much physical hunger, it is a cry for the bread of life which they do not understand—the soul's deep need crying for God. As you walk the streets and see pinched faces, bleared countenances that sin has wrought, you see that you

are in the midst of a bread riot. Millions are crying for the bread of life. They do not know how to interpret it, but it is the deep cry of the soul's hunger. Legislators try to legislate to satisfy the cry, philanthropists try to satisfy with gifts of money—but all in vain. Only Christ and Him crucified can satisfy this soul thirst. The universe of man longs for God. Even those who know God but reject Him I believe have times when their souls long for God. The Cross comes and conquers this thirst.

(a) *It is the bread which came down from Heaven.* A heavenly satisfaction must be given. Earth had tried to satisfy, but failed. There is no religion on earth competent to satisfy except the religion of the Cross. Great civilizations have had great theories for the purpose of satisfying. The Egyptian, the Persian, the Greek, the Roman theories have fallen to pieces. Still the soul cries in hunger. At the world's fair in Chicago, when the congress of religions was being held, an exponent of each great religion in the world was defining his religion, and stating how it would satisfy—the Mohammedan, the Confucianist, the Buddhist, the Catholic and Protestant. When the Protestant representative rose to speak he said something like this: "The Confucianist said his religion was the greatest and the most satisfying. I say to you, China, with its teeming, suffering millions, is an answer to this statement. The Hindu has presented and lauded Hinduism—I call your attention to the suffering millions of India as sufficient answer to him. The Moslem brother has exploited Mohammedanism—I call your attention to the Turkish Empire, the unhappy state of its people as an answer. The Roman Catholic has given you as his ideal the great Roman Church—I call your attention to the ignorance and

poverty of South America as an answer. I present the true, unadulterated gospel of Jesus Christ, presented to every individual in God's Holy Word—the Protestant faith, as the best, and in proof I point to you the civilization of Germany, England, Scandinavian, and America." The conquest of the Cross extends over the thirst of the soul and satisfies.

3. *Another conquest is that of our place in God's kingdom.* The place we formerly and rightly occupied in God's kingdom has been retaken, and we are permitted again to stand on territory, for some time taken by the Devil. The indemnity was paid by the Cross and that gave us free possession to what rightly belonged to us. In the prisons of Europe you will find on the record something like this—the name of a prisoner, after which is written "debt paid by John Howard." He was a prisoner, John Howard paid the debt, the prisoner was freed. We were prisoners, Jesus Christ on the Cross paid the debt and we are free. We are never able to possess the best in life until the debt of sin has been paid. When Henry Clay was a candidate for some kind of an office, he was greatly in debt. His friends asked the privilege of paying his debts for him. Being rather independent and proud, he refused. However, he soon discovered in his campaign that the fact that he was greatly in debt was injuring him and was likely to defeat him. Whereupon, he notified his friends that he would accept their goodness and allow them to pay his debt. This they did. Immediately Henry Clay had a different and better stand before the court of the people. You and I are in debt. Needless to say, our standing in the court of God is much enhanced when Christ has paid our debts.

In this conquest of a new place or a new life, everything becomes changed. Just how this takes place we may see in that which is taking place every week at our great Emigrant Station at Ellis Island. As one was walking through, his attention was called to an old gray-haired father and mother. They were greatly excited. They had been informed that they could not enter because they were old and had not sufficient funds. Just as they seemed almost beside themselves, in came a fine looking, well-dressed young Italian man, who threw his arms about their necks and gave them a royal welcome. The authorities asked him who he was. He told them, and said, "These are my parents. They are old. I have sent to Italy for them that I may care for them the remainder of their days," and produced evidence that he was well able so to do. The old couple, condemned to return to Italy as undesirable subjects, are now remaining through the competency of the son. You and I have been condemned as unworthy citizens to the kingdom of God, when Jesus Christ enters, by way of the Cross, and intercedes for us. Thus we are admitted as citizens into the new city, through the competency of the Cross. In other words, a place in God's kingdom is conquered for us by the Cross.

The method of the conquest is the destruction of sin and its consequences in our lives. A husband and wife went to a mission, and when they returned the husband remarked, "Wife, I think we had better read the Bible." She offered no objection. He began to read, after a bit he said, "Wife, if this Book is true, we are sinners." The wife assented. Next day, reading again he put down the Bible and said, "Wife, if this Book is true we are lost." She replied, "Husband, it looks like that." The next day

he read more, then said, "Wife, if this Book is true we can be saved." She replied, "I have been thinking that as I have heard you read." He said, "Well, wife, let's do as the Book tells us—let us accept Jesus Christ." They knelt, accepted Christ and retired to sleep, with a song in their souls. The next day the husband said, "Wife, if this Book is true we are saved." The conquest of sin in a life!

If you will accept Jesus Christ as your Saviour from sin, I promise you on the authority of God's Word that the Devil, sin, and hell will be destroyed for you, and the conquest of Heaven will begin for you, and eventually the conquest made in your behalf will best be described in the language of Scripture—"In my Father's House are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you."

CHAPTER IV

THE CROSS CONQUERED

(An Easter Sermon)

"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."—Acts 2:24.

Our attention has been directed during recent Sabbaths to the Cross of Christ, as a symbol of suffering and death. We have seen that this suffering and this death was a substitution in the person of one for that which belonged to another. That in order to satisfy justice this suffering and death, which was the penalty pronounced on sin, should or must be met; that God selected this method of punishing his own Son in the suffering and death on the Cross, that the race, created in his image, might be reconciled unto himself. We have been reminded of the marvelous power, the splendid comfort, the tremendous conquest which has accrued because of this suffering and death on the Cross.

Today it is our purpose to remind you that suffering and death, both of which were experienced on the Cross, are results of sin. The statement that all suffering and death is a product of sin needs no argument to confirm it before intelligent people. Sin abounds in the world. Its harvest is suffering and death, which suffering and death culminated at the Cross. Whilst we have declared the Cross conquered and effected a reconciliation between God and man,

and whilst we observe that all good in the world is the result of the conquest of the Cross; in brief, while we have been declaring that the Cross has conquered in many respects, today we declare that the Cross itself is conquered.

This is Easter Day. The Easter Day truth announced is that Christ, the victim of the suffering and death of the Cross, was raised from the dead, thus overcoming suffering and death. Thus, if we prove the correctness of this fact we have proven that the Cross was conquered by the Resurrection.

1. *The evidence for the proof that Christ rose from the dead and conquered the Cross.* That Jesus lived no one denies; that he was put to death under Pilate, the Roman Governor, no one questions; that he was buried is an accepted fact; that he was not in the grave on the third day was admitted by the Jew living at that time, also the Romans, and declared widely by those who had followed him in life. The Bible, which we declare to be God's Word, is the basis of our testimony. If the Bible is correct the statements therein are correct, and it expressly declares that Christ rose from the dead.

(a) Someone asks the question—*How do we know that the Books of the New Testament are the same as those given to the world by the original writers?* We give as purely human evidence the following proof. A Roman philosopher, by the name of Justin, a martyr, was born near the very beginning of the second century, and possibly born before the end of the first century, after the Resurrection, for he wrote two apologies, one to Antoninus Pius as early as the year 139, the other to Marcus Aurelius. Now granting that he was only thirty-nine

years of age when he wrote this defense of the New Testament Scriptures, we find him being born one hundred years after the birth of Christ. Now Christ was not more than thirty-two years of age when He died, so if Christ was thirty-two years of age when He died and Justin was born a hundred years after the birth of Christ, we find that Justin lived just sixty-eight years after the Resurrection, and we have copies of these two apologies, written by a man who lived sixty-eight years after the Resurrection.

Following closely on the heels of this, another man by the name of Origen was born A. D. 185. We have four volumes of his works preserved today. That the New Testament was a widely used book in his day we know by the number of quotations he makes from it. He quotes from practically every book in the New Testament—from Matthew 1352 quotations, from Mark 195, Luke 649, from John 775, and so on through the whole New Testament we find him quoting more than five thousand pages from the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. Thus we find this entire book existing as early as 185 A. D., or which was only one hundred and fifty years after the Resurrection.

Now our Declaration of Independence was written in Philadelphia in 1776, or 150 years ago. No one lives who lived then, but do you think for one minute any sensible person would discredit the statement that the Declaration was written one hundred and fifty years ago? Absolutely no! We have the Declaration over the signature of men who signed and we have historical proof that they authentically attested the fact. The fact is, we have just as strong evidence today, outside the strongest evidence that of God's Word, that the Resurrection of Christ took

place, as we have that the Declaration of Independence was written and signed in Philadelphia. Then we have evidence that the Cross, the symbol of death, was overcome by the Resurrection, the symbol of life.

(b) But someone else asks the question—*How do we know but that these writers of the New Testament were not impostors?* We may prove that they actually wrote, but how do we know that they were not impostors, fakers? Well, if they were impostors they knew it and they knew that an impostor would have no chance in the resurrected life. What good would they gain from delivering such a statement? The fact remains, they were not getting out of it enough to pay for the sacrifice they had to make in presenting the message to the world. They made the declaration, they took their lives in hand, and died for their statement. I challenge anyone to show me during the six thousand years of history where anyone has ever died willingly for presenting what he knew to be false. Where did ever a man die as a martyr for that which he knew to be false? We know these men were not impostors because we know there was nothing ahead of them for making this declaration of the Resurrection, but persecution and death. It is easy to see how a man could die for a thing that is right—history is full of such; but for a man to hold to that which he knew to be false, that would result in punishment and death, would reveal his insanity—entirely out of harmony with human nature. We cannot charge these men with trying to deceive—there was too much at stake.

(c) Somebody says—*They may have been honest men, but were themselves deceived.* This is scarcely possible. When Jesus was dead, Joseph, a warm friend of Jesus, went to Pilate, and obtained

permission to take the body from the Cross and bury it in his own tomb. The Jews were suspicious and went to Pilate and showed him the danger of this. They said, "Suppose the disciples take the body down, lay it away in the grave, and everybody knows he has been buried; then afterward they come and take the body away and report that He has risen from the dead. In that case, if the body could not be found, it would be believed that He had risen from the dead, and this would make the last error worse than the first." So they asked Pilate to place a strong guard around the tomb, to prevent the friends of Jesus from using deception. Without a guard the enemies of Jesus could say the disciples took Him away. The precaution taken by the Jews left no room for this. Even the disheartened disciples thought everything was ended, for they were surprised at the news that the grave was empty. If the Jews had really believed that the disciples had stolen Jesus' body, persecution would have started then and there to force them to reveal what they had done with it. The finding of the dead body would have ended all discussion. The Jews did not take the body out of the grave, they were trying to prevent just this thing. The Romans had no interest in the matter, except in an official way to do their duty. They could have no object whatever in taking the body, now dead, out of the grave.

But Jew and Roman admit the grave is empty the third morning. How can it be accounted for? The only answer possible is that God raised Him from the dead. Then just fifty days after the crucifixion Peter stood in Jerusalem and told the Jews face to face that they had murdered Jesus, but that He was risen from the dead and was now both

Lord and Christ. If they thought that Peter was not telling the truth they would have resisted his statement, but instead they were pierced in heart and cried to know what they should do about it. Peter told them to repent and believe. The idea that these three thousand men who had seen Him put to death as an impostor only a few weeks before would do such a thing publicly in Jerusalem, without having some great event to convince them of the truth of Peter's statement. No one can account for Peter's action at Pentecost and remain an infidel. Fifty days before, Peter had denied and cursed his Lord, now in the same city in the presence of those wild with excitement, proclaims that Jesus had been raised from the dead. He never could have done it if it had not been true. Something wonderful had taken place. Jesus had risen. Peter knew it. Sufficient for any thinking person to be convinced that Christ rose from the dead. If the Christ of the Cross was raised from the dead, as we have proof, then the Cross, the symbol of death has been conquered by the Resurrection, the symbol of life.

2. The Cross has been conquered in another and practical way. The cross, the symbol of suffering and death is caused by sin. Every cross of every kind of every life is the result of sin. *So every cross in life has been overcome by the power of the Resurrection.* We have this beautiful illustration in the method and manner of Christ's appearance after the Resurrection. First, at the tomb and in the garden He appeared to the women who were greatly sorrowing, and then to the two walking enroute to Emmaus, saddened in heart at events that had taken place so recently. Thus sorrow, a human cross, the result of human sin, is

conquered by the presence of the resurrected Christ. Again when the ten are in the upper room, Judas having gone to his own place, and Thomas being absent, the doors barred, great opposition being felt on every side, Christ appears in their midst and announces His presence. Thus, opposition, which is a Cross of sin, is conquered by the risen Christ. Again when the eleven are met, Thomas being present, expressing his doubt, Christ appears and settles their doubt. Thus, doubt, a cross, is overcome by the living Christ. Again when the disciples are fishing, toiling all night in fruitless labor, He appears on the shore to encourage. Thus, toil and labor, a cross, is overcome by the risen Christ. Again, when the five hundred disciples are assembled in the Mount of Galilee, discussing their next move, He appears and gives them instruction what to do—"Go ye into all the world and preach." Thus when indecision, a cross, comes, the risen Lord comes to conquer. And last, when He appears to James. No reason is stated for that appearing, no lesson or statement is given. It is as though He came to James and presented him with a blank card, and said, whatever be your cross state on this blank and I will conquer. Thus all the crosses of life are conquered by the risen, living Christ.

And last, the greatest cross of all,—death and the fear of it, absolutely conquered. With the truth of the Resurrection engraved on our hearts we may all say with the poet "What we call death is not death, but only transition." A woman traveling is informed of a great tunnel through which she must pass. She is greatly exercised, fearing the passage through the tunnel. As she travels onward she falls asleep in the car. While asleep the train passes through the tunnel. Some time later

she awakens, and thinking they must be near the tunnel is exercised about it and inquires of the porter when they shall reach the tunnel. She is informed that the tunnel had been passed, as she quietly and peaceably slept through the passage. Death is only a tunnel and God has so arranged that we graciously and peaceably sleep through the passage. Through the revelation of the risen Christ we have inducements offered that make us unafraid to pass through the tunnel of death in order to secure the reward offered.

A boy whose little sister was dying, had heard that if he could secure but a single leaf from the tree of life, that grows in the garden of God, the illness could be healed. He set out to find the Garden, and implored the angel sentinel to let him have one leaf. The angel asked the boy if he could promise that his sister should never be sick again, if his request be granted; that she would never be unhappy, never do wrong, never be cold and hungry, never be harshly treated. The boy said he could make no such promise. Then the angel opened the gate a little way and asked the child to look into the garden for a moment. Then said he, "After you have seen the garden, if you still wish to have a leaf to heal your sister and keep her in the world of sin, I will ask the King to give you one." The boy looked in and after seeing the beauty and blessings within the gate, he said softly to the angel, "I will not ask for the leaf now. There is no place in the world so beautiful as that." There is no friend so kind as the angel of death. If we only knew, if we only could see a little further in, we would all feel that the Cross of death has been conquered.

Easter faith opens the door, it gives us glimpses of glory. It is this that He came to the world to do for us—to bring life and immortality to light through His Gospel.

PART II
THE ROYAL REDEEMER

CHAPTER V

THE ROYAL REDEEMER EXERCISING AUTHORITY

"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves."—Matt. XXI-12.

I think sometimes we use the term Christianity so much and have become so familiar with the Christian Church that we fail to recognize the Founder or the chief Cornerstone of Christianity and the divine origin of the Christian Church. That the Royal Redeemer was no other than the Christ of Bethlehem, the Boy of Nazareth, the Teacher of Galilee. That He had authority above every human creature we know full well. We know that when the sea was disturbed by the violence of the storm and His companions were in imminent danger of losing their lives, He spoke a single sentence, "Peace, be still," and the waters subsided; the winds abated; His companions were saved. No one else ever uttered a single sentence with sufficient authority to quiet the boisterous waves and abate the wind and the storm. Christ was One Who had authority.

That He had authority in other ways, we have only to imagine ourselves in company with Him when He looked upon that fig tree at the season of the year when it should have been producing fruit and seeing on it only leaves and no figs, He

pronounced what we term for lack of better language a curse on that fig tree. Passing the same fig tree a few hours later, we find its leaves are withered; it is now barren, without fruit, without leaf; it is dead. His authority over non-productiveness. He spurns it, for it is a law of nature that the thing that is not utilized becomes useless and the thing that is empty and non-productive is the thing that is caught first in the power of death.

He had power over the sea, over the fig tree, and when the great throng following Him, forgetful of food, came to their senses prompted by hunger, He found just a little food supply and that in the possession of a boy. I love to think of that incident in our Lord's life and I love to think of that little lad. Sometimes parents say the boy does not know enough or is not old enough to understand and therefore they are forbidden to make confession of their faith in Christ and come into the church. But that boy knew more than all the fathers and mothers in the company of four or five thousand. He knew enough to take his dinner; the parents did not. It is possible spiritually for the lad or the lassie to know more than some adults. That lad could not have been, according to the Greek language way of expressing the statement, over twelve years of age. The lad had his little lunch. The Lord spoke to his little supply and in response to His addressing it the loaves multiplied; the fish multiplied, and four thousand and more were fed to their fill and then baskets were gathered up of that which was left over. If the lad had not known more than the adults, Jesus would have been put to it to supply them in some other way, and He could do it. He had authority over their little supply.

Jesus had authority over disease. When they brought to Him twenty persons afflicted with disease, He healed them. When they took Him to fourteen cases of persons with disease, He healed them; when six lone persons came seeking relief, He healed them. There is no record of failure on His part to heal disease. He is the same yesterday, today, forever. If He could heal then, He can now. If He sympathized with humanity then, He will now. He is unalterable in His purpose.

So we have a right to do what we have just done, to call upon Him to use His healing power, not forgetting to use the means He has put into our hands. But there is a place where His authority and power manifest themselves better than anything I have suggested and that is in the presence of death. When He is brought before that body of a lassie, He has only to say, "Arise" and there is some power within Him accompanying the call and the dead lassie comes to life. He has only to stand before the tomb of Lazarus, dead and decaying, and Lazarus comes forth into the realm of life. I sometimes wish that we had some little record of what Lazarus must have talked about to his sister and to others as to what happened to him during the experience he had during the days that he was in the realm of the dead, but we haven't a single record. And the fact is, I believe, God expects us to live by faith, and the fullness of the thing that is to come after death will be revealed in God's way and in His time. That He has authority no one can doubt.

And He must speak with authority when He says, "Go work today in my vineyard." It is not what the preacher says; I find people saying sometimes, "The minister said so and so." What the minister

says is not worth a copper cent except as it is enforced by, permeated with, and substantiated by the word of God. The preacher says it is incumbent upon every Christian to do service in the vineyard of the Lord. The endorsement of the Scripture is: "Go work today in my vineyard." The preacher says, "Go out into the streets and lanes of the city and persuade them to come in." The endorsement of the scripture is: "Go ye into the uttermost parts of the earth, teach all nations, baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost."

But I want to be specific and make three statements concerning the exercising of authority. In that beautiful chapter of Matthew, when Jesus comes *into* that city, goes where He has a perfect right to go, for He is a member of the Jewish race,—into the temple, He finds them buying and exchanging. He finds it a market place instead of a worshipful place. He drives the money changers from the temple who are making money at the expense of the poor worshippers. I want to call your attention to this and I wish it might get rooted and grounded into our lives so that we could never forget it, that here in this passage about His exercising authority, He Who speaks with authority, called that place the "Temple of God." "Jesus went into the Temple of God."

As I intimated a moment ago, we have somehow in our contact with the world, gotten a conception of the church that is wrong. The church is not just mortar and stone, plaster and paint; the church is a Divine institution. Why are you good people going out and appealing to men and women to come into the church? Is it because we have a beautiful place; because we have a most cordial, social

and loyal membership? These are all good, but the church we want our neighbors to join, is the church of our living God, the Temple of God which was a place from the very beginning that God Himself set apart for His followers to go and commune together and with Himself. God put it into the heart of Abel and Cain, after their parents had been exiled from the garden. God put it into their hearts and minds to build an altar of stone. There was no precedent before them. They were the first children. Their parents had no knowledge of anything that had gone before them. God said to them: "Build an altar, offer your sacrifice in a certain way and on a certain condition I will come down and talk with you." Abel met the conditions. The smoke went from his altar and God came down and blessed him. Cain built his altar, but he sacrificed according to his judgment instead of the judgment of God and there was no perfuming smoke to go up into the presence of God. You know what happened. But there is the first lesson of God communing with man and it was at a particular place arranged in a particular way and had its conception and origin in the mind and heart of God.

Then following that altar of stone came the erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness,—a place for God to meet His chosen people in which they were to get direction as to which way to go. Following that was the temple at Mount Moriah. Who was the architect that designed the temple at Mount Moriah? It was Almighty God. Read the Scripture. God was the Architect. He made the plans; He gave them to the builders, and the temple was built according to His plan. Into this building the Son of God went, and found instead of a communion among the group with God Who

built the temple, He found them buying and selling,—forgetting that God was in His holy temple, and He puts them out of the Temple.

Then we find Him teaching the Bible in the synagogue in Nazareth and when He could no longer stay because of the enmity of the Jews within the synagogue, He was forced out for declaring Himself the Messiah promised by the prophets. Then followed the first communion service instead of the Feast of the Passover, which is the foundation of the old Jewish law. The church is not a man-made institution, nor a man-protected institution, nor a man-advanced institution. The church is God's institution and we are in God's house. We are in God's organization and it is in this that we invite our friends to come. Why? We will see just a moment or two later.

One speaking with authority designated the temple as the "Temple of God." This is the Church of God, the Church of Christ, or it is not living up to its so called constitution.

Now the second thing is this: He designated it as a place of prayer—the House of God, the Temple of God, the place of prayer—not a place to barter and sell, not a place to advance anything that is worldly,—a place to commune with God, a place for prayer. At the very beginning of our week of services, the outcome will be in proportion to the praying that is done. The night before Jonathan Edwards preached that sermon that has gone the rounds of the church ("Sinners in the hands of an angry God,") the officials of his church spent the entire night in prayer. The people were so convicted of sin that they are said to have grasped the pews lest they fall into the perdition he was describing. And Livingston, that splendid young evangel-

ist, was astonished at the revival that broke out in that little town of Shotts. But the old Scotch elders whom he thought were absent instead were out under an old apple tree praying when Livingston started his sermon. Moody was just ready to vacate Birmingham, England, thinking he was a failure when he was persuaded to wait another day or two. In two days' time or thereabouts there was a complete change. The atmosphere and the attendance were different, everything was different. A revival broke out and Moody insisted on finding out just where that change originated. He traced it back to a bed-ridden woman who had heard of his disappointment and went to God in prayer.

Prayer! The place of prayer! Jesus said, "It is written My house shall be called a house of prayer; you have made it a den of thieves." Let us make our house a house of prayer, not a den of thieves.

This morning in my mail I received a little note, in it a check for a hundred dollars for our Easter offering, to have part with us in the work we are doing here. It comes from a praying woman who has been in bed thirty-seven years. We can pray and if we pray right we will be looking around for some way to answer our own prayers. He Who spoke with authority said: "My House is the Temple of God; My house is the place of prayer."

And notice one thing more that followed. We read immediately: "The blind and the lame came to Him in the temple and He healed them." When we recognize that we are a banded group coming to commune with God, when we recognize this the temple of God, the place of prayer, what will be the result in the community? It may not be a physical healing, but it will be a mental healing, a spiritual healing. When we can remember that this is God's

house, a place where we can come and have our lives charged and surcharged with God ("They came sick and went away strong"), when we come to the place that is the temple of God and recognize it as the place of prayer, we are just coming to put ourselves in communion with unlimited power.

In our house we have a radio. Sometimes the battery runs down and we have to take it out and get it charged. My boy came to me the other night with a charger. He said: "When our battery gets weak while we sleep in the night it will be recharged." Prayer is the charger that connects the line between us and God. Are you praying for this great ingathering? Are you linking up with God that our spiritual battery may be charged and surcharged? Remember this, friends: Christianity is the most practical thing in the world. So often we get the idea, especially in the outside world, that religion is a kind of insurance against the future. Yes, I am interested in people dying and in dying people, but I am more interested in people living and living people. Religion is the biggest and best thing in the world to live by and when it is lived by, we die by it. It is practical. It gives us everything we have worth while in life. I have not, I cannot have a great deal of sympathy with that type of religion that does not stand out before the world enjoying the best things in the world, living the best and truest life, a life that can look the world square in the face without fear of what they may say or think.

Down South a famous Methodist minister was invited to preach in a Negro church and as he was preaching away, the good colored friends were shouting "Amen" and after he threw it into what they call an "experience meeting," over in the cor-

ner was a woman who insisted on giving her experience and prolonging it. Her religion was such a wonderful experience. It had lifted her up and out of and away from the world, and when she got through, Dr. Buckley looked at her and said, "My dear woman, your experience was a fine one; it lifted you up to the skies, but does it make you a better wife to your husband, a better mother for your children; does it help you in serving God?" He felt a tugging at his coat and an old colored man said: "Press dem things hard, preacher; that woman is mah wife."

Christianity that can express itself in business, in the home, anywhere and everywhere is looking at the spirit of the Master. His life was not a somber hue. It was a life that enjoyed the wedding feast at Cana, a banquet with Matthew, the business man, where He went to have an opportunity to speak and where He came and listened to the crowd that was there. I allowed a group of men to come to my church once. Someone found fault. "Are you going to allow a crowd like that?" I said, "Yes. If you will agree to get the saloonkeepers' union to come to church next Sunday night, I will make room for every one of them." We want to get the gospel to every one, to teach them to live. He Who spoke with authority said that the church is the Temple of God. Don't we want to be in and help in the Temple of God? It is the place of prayer and prayer is the connecting link between the weak battery of sinners and God. It is the institution that has done more for the uplift of humankind than all other institutions together.

I read a story of a woman who every time she went away on the train took a package of flower seed with her into the country and then took the

seed out of her bag and tossed it out of the window and soon all along the railroad tracks flowers were growing. No one knew how they came there. All along the way she threw the seeds and flowers came. The church has been throwing seeds of beauty, of helpfulness for the uplifting of the human race for 2000 years. We can support no institution better than that which is the Temple of God, the place of prayer and the source of healing of sin and its consequences.

PRAYER

Our Lord and our Master, we thank Thee for this privilege that is ours tonight, for this splendid representative presence tonight. The Lord be praised for praying Christians, for answered prayer, for manifestations coming from answered prayer. Let Thy blessing rest upon everyone here and may we cry with David, "Wilt thou not revive us again, O Lord, that thy people may rejoice?" If there is one here who has not made a confession of Christ, we pray that he may do so tonight and prepare to unite with the church, the Temple of God, the source of healing from sin.

We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

CHAPTER VI

THE ROYAL REDEEMER REJECTED

"Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified."—Matthew 27:22.

Pilate himself is convinced that the charges made are false. He tries a diplomatic maneuver, hoping to spare the defendant and at the same time maintain his own popularity with the people at large, and if possible to increase it. In other words, he tried a piece of political treachery, offering to release from prison one of the mob's own number in exchange for the freedom and liberty of the man from Galilee. Such an exchange of prisoners was not acceptable to the mob. Barabbas was the prisoner in the custody of Pilate. Jesus was the prisoner in the hands of the mob. Pilate would exchange that he might save the Galilean. The mob refused an exchange. Thereupon Pilate cries out in his dilemma: "What then shall I do with Jesus, which is called the Christ?" The most important question he could possibly have asked. On the answer of his question depends his own safety or destruction. He answers wrongly, surrenders the Christ to the crowd. By so doing he seals his own doom, goes out from that trial a marked man—marked for failure, marked for ruin, marked for perdition.

We want to be charitable and say probably Pilate did not recognize the importance of the question he

had answered. He had not weighed it sufficiently. He had not realized how much depended upon the answer. It is no longer Pilate's question to an unruly mob. It is the Holy Spirit's question to every heart and every life. If it has not, be well assured that it will come to each one of you,—Pilate's question, changed to the Holy Spirit's question, and you will be compelled to ask the question, "What shall I do with Jesus who is called the Christ?"

Let the enlightened people of the world, who know the Scripture concerning God and His Christ, answer the question correctly and war and bloodshed will end instantly. The struggle of Pilate's life, the wretched days that followed his answer, the awfulness of the end to which he came, was due to the fact that he answered his own question incorrectly.

We read in God's Word, how when Israel went astray from God, God sent down an army of Medes, or Persians or Babylonians and brought them back to their senses. We read when Judea and Israel strayed from God, God used the nations to punish Israel, and then exercised his own power in a marvelous way in teaching the other nation, whom He had used to punish Israel, a lesson concerning himself. We have been taught this lesson from childhood in the Sunday Schools. Some of us have taught it in the Sunday School. We say it is a fine lesson, fine discipline for God to exercise toward Israel in the days that are past. But we fail to understand that history repeats itself, and God is so exercising himself on the face of the earth today. We cannot separate the God of yesterday from the God of today, or tomorrow. God is eternal. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever.

1. *God's acceptance of you in the Day of Judgment depends upon how you answer this question.* It is imperative that you do answer. The Holy Spirit is present tonight making each one of you to ask this question, What shall I do then with Jesus? If you accept Him and take Him into your life, God will accept you and take you to be with Him when you are done with this life; but if you do not accept Christ and take Him into your life you are now, this very minute, in the place where you are sitting, rejected of God and condemned. That's a strong statement. Perhaps something smoother would be better liked, but I am not responsible for the statement. If the statement is like a dagger that pierces your life, it is God's dagger, for God's Word says, "If you reject Christ you are condemned." "He that believeth not is condemned already." It is not a case of waiting until the final judgment day to be condemned—you are already condemned if you have not confessed Christ. On the other hand, if you take Christ into your life as a personal Saviour you are not condemned now, cannot be condemned, and will never be condemned. Paul, who lived so close to Jesus that he understood his very mind, says, "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ." Rejecting Christ, the Judge of all the world, this minute, pronounces your verdict, "condemned to eternal punishment."

2. *The peace and comfort of your life and mine depends on how you answer this question.* Nobody would for a minute gainsay the statement that Pilate was a wicked man—the wicked are like the restless, surging sea, never at peace. A friend of mine worked in the store a few days ago all day, went to his home in usual health, spent the evening with

members of the family, retired as usual, and next morning was found dead in his bed. Fortunately he was a Christian man. He went to bed peaceably, not expecting death, but not fearing it. I believe it impossible for any man or for any woman to retire at night, bury his head in the pillow, make himself comfortable and go to sleep in perfect peace, knowing full well that if he should be found dead in the morning his soul would be associating with the soul of Pilate who rejected Christ. Your conscience is disturbed. On the other hand, Paul says, and he knew he had been a rejector of the Christ, and even a persecutor of the Christ, he never was at peace while doing this, but now having accepted Christ and made Him Master of his life, he says "Being justified by faith we have peace from God through Jesus Christ." Martin Luther, the promising scholar or monk at Erfert, with an alluring future ahead of him in the Church at Rome, was not at peace. There was something standing between him and Christ. He himself says he had no peace of mind until he broke from the evils of the day and accepted Christ.

Two gamblers are seated at a table. They are gambling. One of them is dishonest in the game. The other one shoots him. Realizing what he had done, he leaps to the side of the man he has shot, tries to check the flow of blood and appears to be an angel of mercy instead of a murderer. Because of this he is acquitted, it being shown that his partner was a suicide in the trial. The acquitted murderer quits gambling, seeks different company, even joins the Church, but has not experienced any change of heart—he is the most miserable wretch. One day he chances in on a revival service. Feeling

the wretchedness of that hidden sin he has anything but peace. When the Congregation begins to sing

“What can wash away my sins?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

What can make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.”

He saw Christ on the Cross in the singing of the hymn. He accepted Him, made confession, and has a peace never experienced before.

3. *Your happiness depends upon your answer to this question.* For too long has the world thought to find happiness in wealth, or delight in pleasure. But in both cases a mistake is granted. I have visited a home of wealth, beautiful home, carpets the best, decorations the finest, furniture the most costly—everything as perfect as money can buy. I have visited with the people in this home. They thought they were happy. In other words, they tried to deceive themselves to make themselves think they were. Something was wanted. From that home I have gone to the home of a poor blind woman. Only a shack of a house, carpets none, furniture little, food scanty. But the blind woman is happy as any one could find. Said I to her, “Your lot must be hard, sitting and living in continual darkness.” But said she, “You are mistaken. I am as happy as can be. You can’t understand. I am wealthy. I am the daughter of a King.” I have talked with young men and young women going the rounds of worldly pleasure, when they were healthy and strong, have plead with them to be careful. They have laughed me to scorn. I have stood beside the death-bed of these same persons. They grip my hand the tightest. They plead with me to stay longest, they want me to pray most frequent. They are absolutely emphatic in declaring that I was right and they

were wrong, that to spend one's strength in the pursuit of pleasure is wrong—"vanity, vanity, all is vanity."

4. *Eternity depends upon the answer to this question.* There are many who have been saying, and many who are saying still, that by living a good, clean, moral life I shall have eternal life. Let me say to you that everything you know about living a good life or a moral life comes from God's Word. You accept that part of God's Word and declare your willingness to stand on it and by it. Why not be consistent. If that part of God's Word which has taught you how to be moral, to be clean, is correct, why is not the rest of it correct? And in the rest of it we find that if we deny Christ and refuse to accept Him He will refuse to accept us. In the rest of it we find that the greatest law of all the Scripture is that we will love God with our whole body, mind and soul. Why isn't that true too? If it is, we will want to be a Christian. There are others who are seeming to think that simply by joining a Church they are perfectly safe. They join and then journey, journey just as far away from the teaching of the Church as decency will allow.

A mother took her child to a music teacher and wanted her to train the child in music. She joined the child to the music teacher, and then said, "I don't want you to coerce or persuade or discipline her. I want the child to be a musician, but I just want the child to drift into it." Perfect nonsense! But there are a lot of people joined to the Church, they want to be good at the right time, but that time is when time is no more, or evidently just wanting to drift into sainthood.

5. *The answer.* We intimated at the outset that there was only one of two ways to answer the ques-

tion, What shall I do with Jesus? Reject Him as Pilate did and have Pilate's fate: Accept Christ and go with Him where He is. Let Him in or shut Him out! "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man will open I will come in and sup with him." He stands at the door of your heart, knocking for admission, as evidently tonight as He stood before Pilate. You are saying "Come in" or "Stay out." If a tramp should come to my door on a cold, stormy night, with nowhere to sleep, and ask to be taken in, as a rule we pity and take him in, if not in our own home we make provision for him somewhere. To slam the door and push him out in the cold would stamp us as hard-hearted. To find a friend at our door on a stormy night, stranded, nowhere to go, and shut the door in his face, stamps us even below the human. Jesus Christ is a friend. He is out in the cold world, amidst the storms of evil, seeking the lost. He stands before you and knocks at the door of your heart. You are saying "Come in" or "Stay out."

The man who keeps Christ out of his life is practicing treason, and is a traitor. Oh, you say impossible! But listen, to keep a King out of His Country, out of His right belonging, is treason. Jesus Christ is King over all kings, and to keep Him out of that life of yours, which rightly belongs to Him, makes you a traitor. You don't believe it! You are so good. Well, let's see. You are true to your wife, a good husband; you are true to your children, a good father; you are faithful in your business, you are a good neighbor—you are so good, so good! But your mother comes to your home, you refuse to let her in, you turn your back on her, you put her out. What are you—traitor, scoundrel! Wouldn't a man that would do that be a scoundrel? Listen! Jesus

loves you more than your mother. He has done more for you than a mother has or could. However good a husband you may be, however good a father you may be, however straight in business you may be, if you turn Christ out you are—what? Strong language! If there is anyone here that doubts the truth of what I have said, I would be glad to meet you in my study after service.

It was a crisis for Pilate when Jesus stood before him, and he asked the crowd the question, What he should do with Jesus. It is a crisis for you tonight. It is a crisis for me—what shall I do with Jesus? I must present Him to you with all the force I can command, the Spirit is saying. How are you accepting the Christ which is presented? Your own best thought, your own inward conscience is saying to you, Release Jesus, give Him right-of-way in your heart. The Spirit so spoke to Pilate. The Devil and the crowd, or rather the Devil through the crowd, said, "Crucify Him." Pilate listened to the crowd or rather the Devil through the crowd and yielded Him up to be crucified.

6. Pilate sits in yonder chair. He is thinking. *He decides.* He decides wrong. His fate is sealed, his life is misery, his soul is condemned. You sit in this pew tonight. You are thinking. You are deciding the question before you, "What shall I do then with Jesus, who is called the Christ?" Release Him, let Him loose in your heart. God help you make Him loose in your heart.

CHAPTER VII

THE ROYAL REDEEMER WEeping

(*Communion Sermon*)

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."—Isaiah 53:3.

"And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup be taken from me."—Matt. 26:39.

A Royal Redeemer weeping! He was born to weep; He was announced to be One Who would weep. I want in a very brief way to have us get before our minds' eye tonight a picture of Him Who, Isaiah said, would come in sorrow, would live in sorrow and of Whom Matthew said, He cried in Agony, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup be taken from me." And if we have a correct picture of Him, we can then better partake of those elements, the purpose of which is to remind us of Him and His entire sacrifice, His sacrifice which culminated on Calvary. That was not the whole of His sacrifice. What kind of a sacrifice would you and I consider it to leave our comfortable homes in Philadelphia and go and live in the jungles of Africa? That would be a sacrifice as great as you and I could endure. Christ left heaven with its grandeur, its beauty, its comfort, its delight, and came to earth. The difference between your home and the little thatched cabin in the central part of Africa is a very poor illustration when we compare heaven to earth.

His whole life was a sacrifice. Calvary was the culmination. In the first place, *see Him tonight as a rejected man*. He came from heaven to our level. He was not born in a palace. He was not born to parents of plenty. He was born to humble parents; He was born in a stable; He was rejected from the hotel before He left His mother's womb. He was rejected at Nazareth when He returned home to visit His family. He was rejected when He offered salvation to His race. He was rejected when they nailed Him to Calvary. He was a poor man. Oh, how un-Christlike from the very moment of His birth to His ascension! You think because one possesses a little of this world's goods he is better than another. One wish, one desire of my life would be if some one would just take my responsibilities and provide for my family, that I might work for the poor.

The poor heard Him gladly. They were the ones from whom Christianity has gone over the world.

Christ was more than a rejected man. *He was a man of sorrow*. He had compassion on the crowd. As He watched the surging throng, He knew what they were thinking about, knew what was in their hearts and lives. He could see inside as well as outside. Listen! When He saw the passing throng, He did not criticize; He did not censure; He did not scorn; He did not backbite. He sympathized with them and we read He had compassion on the crowd. Compassion is love in action. He loved.

You say you love a person and hate their sin. If you do you commend the person, but you don't do that. You condemn the person and give the sins an excuse for that condemnation. It is unscriptural and un-Christlike. He was sympathetic. Have you ever tried to picture Him when He met that widow

taking her only means of support to the cemetery, how He stopped and looked upon her and brought her son back to life! Have you ever tried to picture Him as He stood before Lazarus' tomb and sympathized with Mary and Martha and how He groaned in His sympathy for them? Picture Him as He sat on the slope and looked across the ravine to the City of Jerusalem. No word of criticism, no word of censure, or of fault-finding, but listen! like the crooning of a mother when she is pouring out her heart's love, "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that hath stonest the prophets. How often would I have come unto thee and gathered thee as a hen gathereth her brood, but thou wouldst not." That is the Master's spirit. Did you ever think of Him as He looked down from the cross and saw His mother? He said, "John, take my mother."

He was a rejected Man; He was a Man of sorrows; *He Was a suffering Man*. No human will ever be called upon to suffer as He suffered. When you see Him on the cross it does seem as if our common intelligence would teach us to say that a sacrifice like that for me is sufficient to drive me to do what He wants me to do, to seek first God and His righteousness.

Over in Antwerp there is hanging in one of the galleries a great painting by Reubens of the "Descent from the Cross." A stranger wandered in and was standing gazing upon that painting, the lowering of the body of the Christ from the cross. There was a soft light from the sun coming through the tinted pane of the window. A beautiful life! The hour for closing came and the old janitor, performing his duty at the museum, saw the man standing looking intently and touched him on the shoulder and said, "It is closing time; you must go." The

man turned and with a sob said, "Oh, wait until they get Him down." Have we time to wait from business, from social life, from going the way the world goes, until they get Him down from the cross for us?

Jesus was also a Man who died for sin. In the days of fighting between England and Scotland, the English soldiers were pursuing Bruce and a lone companion with bloodhounds. When Bruce and his companion heard the hounds nearer and nearer they thought they would soon be caught and executed. Just then the companion observed a stream. He said, "Come, let us wade down this stream. It will send the hounds back and we can make our escape." So they did. The bloodhounds of Satan are on the track of sinning humanity. Only by wading in the stream that flows from Calvary can we throw them off the track and that stream is the blood from the piercing of the Christ.

He was then a super-man. He was human, but He was more. He was a super-man. We have this picture before us tonight for two reasons. We have this picture of the prophecy fulfilled for the Christian, to teach the Christian his responsibility. What is it? If He did that for you what ought you to do for Him? If He was that, a man rejected, a man of sorrow, a suffering man, a man dying for sin, a super-man, what ought you to do when He says "I am your example"?

We have the picture before us in the second place tonight for those who have slipped away, who have made no confession of their faith in Christ. How can you, in all common intelligence, how can you? When God for eight hundred years before Christ was born, told Isaiah just how He would come and Matthew says He came just as Isaiah said—How can

you wander as Peter did and risk falling to the depths that Peter fell when he denied Him? How can you?

A young man came to a certain minister and said, "I want to tell you the kind of life I live. In making a business deal I lied. I don't care about that. In the business world if I have an opportunity to cheat and steal I do it. I don't care." The minister said, "Wait a minute! I want you to do this." He told him of Christ and the cross. Then he said, "Now I want you to go home and say tonight over and over again at least ten times, 'Jesus Christ died for my sins, but I don't care about that.'" The young man went home. He was very brave. He started, "Jesus Christ died for my sins but I don't care about that. Jesus Christ died for my sins but I don't care about that" four times he said it and something stopped him. He rushed for his hat and went back to his minister. He could not say it any more. He said, "If God sent His son to die for me, I do care about it. I want to know more. I want to take Him as my pattern, my life. Will you teach me?"

Jesus died for my sin and yours. Do you care about that? Let us think about that now the remainder of the service.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ROYAL REDEEMER EXECUTED

"And the governor said, 'Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see ye to it.'—Matt. 27:23, 24.

"I am innocent of the blood of this just person." In other words, "I will not assume responsibility for whatever may be done or you may do. I wash my hands as an example that I am innocent. You may do as you please." And they crucified Him.

I shall never forget standing on that little hill outside the sacred City of Jerusalem about ten o'clock Sunday morning with a group of three or four or five other ministers, no one speaking, all with uncovered heads. Finally Dr. Josiah Strong suggested that we have a prayer and he on Calvary led us in prayer. It is impossible to stand in such a place and not have in one's mind a picture of scenes taking place there nineteen hundred years ago. This is supposed to be the anniversary of that occasion when on the summit of that same little hill were three crosses, three executions being performed, two justly and one unjustly.

I know it is not always to the liking of a Protestant that we should give a very plain and, if you will allow the expression, physical picture of the thing that actually took place. We say our Roman

Catholic friends have a monopoly on this, that there is nothing in that for us. I say there is. Who can get a picture of Calvary and not feel an atmosphere such as you cannot find elsewhere? Who can look upon the lacerated forms hanging on the crosses realizing that the central figure is the world's Messiah and not be a better man or woman? There are four pictures in the Word of God of just this thing.

It is a petty thing that we should undertake to criticise what God approves. The descriptions of the crucifixion are complete. I want to suggest two or three things tonight as you are keeping this picture I have suggested in your mind. I want to present to you in every-day language such as we use now the picture that came into my mind at Calvary during the time to which I have referred as having stood there with my friends.

I would have you see prior to that picture in your minds an innocent man undergoing three mock trials, every attempt being made to find some evidence that would make it possible for sentence to be pronounced against Him. But every effort had failed and the one exercising final authority was compelled to say, "I find no fault in Him." Oh, I want you to go with me from the trial room out through a little narrow street in Jerusalem that leads just beyond the gate to the little knoll of Golgotha. They renamed the street. It is called the "Way of Grief." Down the little narrow street, can't you see that, the mob of ignorant, infuriated Jews urged on by cultured Sadducees? Can't you see them as they are compelling Christ to do what the thieves are not doing, to carry His own cross? Already He had been through the night without sleep; already He had been carried from one trial chamber to another; already insulted, already

lacerated with stripes, already humiliated below the lowest, can you see Him with the cross on His shoulder and the jostling, infuriated mob following behind? Can't you see along the side struggling to get near, a group of women who have come to recognize Him and accept Him who are wailing and lamenting? The spectacle that met their eyes was enough to make a woman weep even if she had not accepted Him as her Messiah.

Picture Him now one-third along the little street staggering under the heavy load; watch Him as He literally falls; then hear some voice speak calling Simon out of the crowd saying, "Take the cross the rest of the way." They carry it to the summit. The other two crosses are there perhaps lying on the ground with a base and there are the open holes in the earth. They place the other in the center between. There are two sets of soldiers, one for the thief on the left, one for the thief on the right, an officer giving command in the regular method of execution. They are nailed to the cross preparatory to execution. The third is the one attracting the attention, the One in the center of Whom the centurion is in charge, no under officer if you please. Hear him as he gives orders for the soldiers, each in his place, one at the right hand, one at the left, one at each foot with wooden mallet and iron spikes. Can't you hear that Roman voice giving the order "Strike!"? Can't you hear the pound of the wooden mallet as it hits the head of the iron nail that pierces the hand and drives it into the wood? Can't you see the blood? Then having done their duty, can't you hear the Roman soldier as he says, "Raise!"? Can't you see the muscles of the Romans lifting the heavy wooden timber on which is nailed the Christ and then hear the thud as it is placed in the hole?

I am thinking that when the end of the cross on which the Christ hung struck the bottom of the hole the earth trembled and the rocks broke, and the sun refused to shine. The hosts of heaven were not permitted to see that crime. That is the physical picture that one might have seen.

But it is not finished. The crowd gathers around him. Hear that voice. Never was there a human that spoke like Him: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." Watch through the hours when all nature is asleep. Hear that messenger as he comes out from the temple rushing to those who have the execution in charge telling the great catastrophe that has happened, the shaking of the earth, the veil of the temple which is rent from top to bottom and that which separated the holy of holies from the common is no longer there.

That is the picture of Calvary. We do not see it enough. We do not appreciate it enough. That is the physical picture. Why was it so? I say first it was so because God had ordered it; because man had brought unto himself sin by disobedience to the will of God. Can you picture a man in his relationship to God in sin? Sin is to miss the mark; to miss the mark is to fail. He is a failure in God's sight. One who disobeys law is a criminal. Sinners disobey God's law, and are criminals. A sinner is one who rebels against the government of God. A rebel is an anarchist. A sinner then in the sight of God is a *failure*, a *criminal*, an *anarchist*. Despite that, God said, "I will not always be harsh. I will raise up One Who will deliver him." In the course of time He did, and that is the One Who furnished the spectacle on the cross of Calvary.

I want to pause long enough to let you see how the prophecy was fulfilled which was spoken in the

Garden of Eden. God said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." Sin was bruising Christ's head, yes, but He was crushing its head. "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel." Was Isaiah wrong? Was David wrong? Were the prophets wrong? That is the keynote of every book of the Bible from Genesis until we have the story of fulfillment in Matthew. If these are wrong, what have we left? You have nothing that is any better than the world almanac. A Saviour from sin, absolutely! What was the purpose of it all? It was done that God's plan might be fully put into execution and that was for the purpose of making an atonement of sin. In China when enemies agree to become friends they meet and sit down on a mat. They cut the wrists of each other and put them together with the belief that the blood of one mingled with the other would cement friendship between them. God sent His Son and cut His wrists at Calvary that His blood might flow from His veins into ours and wash us free from sin.

For years after the Civil War it is said there was a certain citizen in Nashville, Tennessee, who every week took a little bouquet to a certain cemetery and put it on a certain grave. They asked if it was his mother. He said no. He said that during the Civil War he was conscripted. He had a little family. "It was permissible in those days," he said, "that I could employ someone to take my place. I employed a young man to go in my stead and in the first battle he was killed. He died for me. He took my place, hence the bouquet each week."

The place on Calvary belonged to you and me. Christ took our place. How would you like tonight to have the spectacle of Calvary before you as your lot? By virtue of sin, Calvary's suffering belonged to us. Jesus took our place. What ought we to do? Having this picture of what He did for us, there ought to be no sacrifice considered hard, no gift large that we could give to Him. Oh, the fretting and the finding fault on the part of those who call themselves Christians when they are asked to give a little gift for the service of the Lord. Listen! Calvary belonged to you. You should have died there. Christ took your place; He took my place. If that cross were laid here and you were told that you were to be nailed to it and hang until dead, you might own a bank, you might own a railroad, all the wealth of Philadelphia, and to escape it you would say, "Take it all but let me live." That cross belonged to us. I make no apology for standing up here and pleading for complete submission of me and mine, you and yours. He took my place; He took your place.

PRAYER

Holy Spirit, write anew, indelible the picture of Calvary on our hearts and minds. Help us to keep it before us as a spur to go forward and show our appreciation for what was done for us there. We thank Thee, O God, for such a gift. We thank Thee, Oh Christ, for such a sacrifice. We thank Thee that we know tonight that Thou art not in the tomb as dead but at the right hand of God, to stand there and seek admission for us into the Kingdom of God. Lord, help us to take unto Thee proper credentials that Thou canst say to the Father, "This man, this woman accepted me on the earth. They worked in my vineyard. They sought to fulfill my law. They

were not ruled by custom and fashion. They sought to do my will. What was lacking in them was fulfilled by me on Calvary. Lord, admit them."

Bless our household. Remember the sick and suffering, the tried and tested. Remember us tomorrow. The Lord glorified Himself in the Sabbath Day. Bless His workers in the vineyard; bless and direct them and grant that there shall be an after-Pentecostal place for them that accept the Lord as a personal Saviour. Hear us in our prayers, for His name's sake. Amen.

PART III
THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR

CHAPTER IX

SUFFERING FOR UNDESERVED HATRED

"The principal men of the people sought to destroy Him."—Luke 19:47.

There were not only angry at Him,—they hated Him. There is a difference between anger and hatred. We, for instance, as parents, become angry with our children, but we never hate them. Hatred, carried to its ultimate end, demands destruction, and that is exactly what these chief men had in mind. The principal men of the people sought to destroy Him. Why? What had He done to merit such an attitude on the part of the *CHIEF* men of the city, or any other people of the city?

I want to call your attention to four things He had done, leading up to this particular incident, and in all probability, the chief men had been a witness to every one of them.

In the first place, *He had re-created a life*, and had performed the miracle of changing a miser into a man. A miser is not a man. We read just prior to this incident that on His way from Jerico he was met by a man by the name of Zaccheus, a man of more or less wealth, but a man, we can readily infer, from what transpires a little later, who considered his wealth as a matter for his own personal use, and personal direction, to do with it exactly as he pleased. There isn't a man in Philadelphia,—there isn't a man or woman created in the image of God, according to God's Word, that has any right to use

his or her possessions as they please, but must use them as God pleases. In conversation with Zaccheus, Zaccheus is convinced that his attitude is wrong, and immediately he is transformed, and he says; "Why, if I have robbed any man, I will make restitution,—and then some!" Great Declaration! You know what is in the man. "And if I have robbed anybody, I will make good four fold, and, Master, now that I see the thing in the right light; now that I have the right perspective of life, now that I recognize your Messiahship, I am perfectly willing to give all that I have for benevolent work." A man transformed! Re-created!

Now, notice that these chief men did not have a word to say about Zaccheus being a liberal man, after the conversation with Christ. They have not a word of criticism to offer concerning his liberality, but they find fault with Jesus because they say, "This Jesus has gone to be a guest with a man who WAS a sinner!" WAS a sinner! They are satisfied with his attitude from now on, but they refer to his past life,—not what he is now. How human that is! Human nature then and human nature now, just the same! When we cannot find any fault with a person who has been transformed, immediately we say, "But look what he was! Look from what he came!" If we are Christians, one look in the mirror would reveal to us what we are, and when we have been with Him, and looked into the mirror of His word we will be as radically and completely and genuinely changed as was Zaccheus. They hated him because He had re-created a life.

Who are the men that actually hate the Church today? Who is it hates the ministers and the missionaries of the Church. Every single member is a minister of the Church if he or she fulfills the func-

tions of a real member. Those for instance, hate the Church, who would open the houses of amusement on Sundays. Many bills are now in the Legislature seeking that that may be done. They hate us because we are seeking to transform lives from mercenary mankind to genuine God-like men. Those who would rob us of our Sabbath day hate us. We have in the Legislature in Harrisburg today eighteen distinct bills seeking to rob us of the sanctity of the Sabbath Day—those who would live for this world, and this life, with its temporalities and its material things.

But an echo comes back from this statement. I think I can hear some of those who profess the name of Christ, some of those enrolled as members of the Church saying, "We dislike the Church; we dislike the minister, because there is a constant call for our material possessions for the support and enlargement of the work of the Church." I think I can hear that echo coming from those who received that letter regarding the Church budget during this last week from the Finance Committee. All wrong! It is not our call, but back of it there are a score of statements from the word of God that every man and woman must recognize, must understand and must conform to, or you cannot expect the blessings of eternal life. For the word of God has to say that every jot and every tittle of this Word must be fulfilled. They hated Him because He re-created life.

And then they hated Him because He had just previously taught them that He,—co-created with God,—demanded a proper use of a man's life and a man's possessions. And He gives them the parable of the talents. To one he gives ten; another five; another one. There is no difference in their requirements as to the investment.

Listen! God demands the following things from us!

1. He demands our bodies:

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Romans 12: 1.

2. God demands of us our minds:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true think on these things."—Phil. 4: 8.

3. God demands our time:

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. Redeeming the time because the days are evil."—Eph. 5: 15.

God demands the influence that we may exert with our bodies, with our minds, with our time. Somebody says: "I can exert such a relatively small influence that it would not be worth while to undertake to do anything for the Lord." The Lord does not demand a man's money. He demands every man's life, and with his life given to the Lord will go his money, according to the teaching of Scripture. Our influence is demanded.

We say we can do so little! I was interested in an illustration along this line. There was a very humble country preacher who realized that he could not preach as the preachers in some of the large centres, and he felt that his ministry was practically a failure from this standpoint. But there dropped into his Church one Sabbath morning a young man of considerable intelligence, who had never thought much of the ministry; or of the church, who was just one of those casual, ordinary men of the town nearby. The young country minister preached a Spiritual sermon, and that young man was present,

and he was impressed. He was already a Church man, but the influence of that Spiritual sermon from that country preacher set him to thinking. It was a one-talent man that set that man to thinking, and he became one of the greatest orators the English world knows. We can never tell what the word of the Lord will do in the mouth of his servants. They are one, or two or five talented men. We cannot tell.

A young minister came to John Brown of Had-dington, and was complaining to him because he had such a small Church, and such a small congregation. He was discontented and dissatisfied. He said, "I cannot do anything." John Brown's reply was this: "My dear young brother, you have a congregation as large as you will be able to give account for in the day of Judgment." You people perhaps do not realize what that means, and especially this congregation.

I am addressing myself in all sincerity, when I feel in the nighttime the awful responsibility of sowing the right seed; of pointing the right direction; what a responsibility in the Day of Judgment for a congregation of over two thousand souls. I must give the Word of God! And Jesus had done that. They hated Jesus because He had demanded all of life for the Creator, and because He had re-created a life.

And the next thing for which they hated Him, was He opened his Heart and gave them a glimpse of the inside. As He stood on Olivet and looked over Jerusalem, He wept, and He wept differently than He did at any other time. When He sat at the grave of Lazarus, He wept, but the Greek Word which is here used means silent tears. But when He stood on Olivet and looked over Jerusalem that had rejected Him, He wept, and the Greek word used

means that He wept aloud. Did you ever stop to think that He never wept when He was lashed with the cruel scourge; that He never wept when the thorns were pressing His brow; that He never wept when the soldiers drove the nails in His hands. He never wept for Himself!: He wept for sinning humanity, and the only time we know that He wept aloud was when He looked up to His own and His own received Him not. He opened His heart and gave them a sight of His feelings, and they hated Him for that.

Then He demanded that the Church be operated God's way, and they hated Him for that. Why should not the Church of Jesus Christ be operated God's way? It's God's institution. The Church is not man's institution. No man or group of men instituted it. People speak so lightly and flippantly about the Church, as though it were nothing but the vilest stone and mortar. The Church is a company of those who seek to live as Christ lived. "Any man who has not the Spirit of Christ is none of His," and though your name may be on the roll of the Church, you may still not belong to the Church.

Look! What is that beginning to rise outside the gates of Eden? God says to Cain and Abel, "Build an altar to the Lord." When God's people had been coming across the wilderness to a land of promise, He said, "Now, you have been building altars and offering sacrifices. Next build a Tabernacle, and I will give you the outline of it." Then when they had come to the land of promise, He said, "Now you have been worshipping in movable tabernacles all these years. Now build a Temple, and I will be the architect." And He was. And He left His directions for the building of the Temple. Then when the people grew and scattered, He sanctioned wor-

ship at other places, and there was a Synagogue in this town, and another in this and another in another. Just a branch of the Temple in Jerusalem. Then when God came to earth in the Person of His Son, the Church ex-communicated Him, and then the Holy Spirit, speaking for Triune God said to the Disciples who went forth from that Pentecostal meeting, "Go out and teach all nations, baptizing them in my name" and this company formed the Church. A Church is God's institution. From the very beginning God has been the Founder of the Church. Read the book of Leviticus, friends, and you will never criticize the Church again. God set aside the Levites, and he said to them, "Let them give their costly mites! Give me a tenth of your possessions for the spread of my Word. Bring in your flock in various forms." It was all done under the direction of Almighty God Himself. "Oh," but you say, "that's Old Testament." All right! Very good! Jesus said, "I have not come to destroy the law." And it was He who said, "Not one jot or one tittle shall pass away till all be fulfilled."

I must stop! They hated Him then. The world hates Him today, because He re-created life; because He demands a proper use of life; and life's possessions; because they did not like to look within His heart, which is a look which calls for sympathy and truth; because He demanded that the Church, bearing His name shall operate His way and not man's way. What is His way? What is His way in connection with our own Church, where we have arrived at a point when we are asking all our members to make a pledge to the Lord. You say you do not believe in pledging for the Lord. Paul says, "Let every man give as God has prospered him." You say you do not believe in pledging. Have you

never pledged anything? Never? Have you not pledged 12 cents each morning to the bread man who leaves your bread on the door step? Have you not pledged 15 cents a day to the milk man who delivers your milk? We never again can say that we do not believe in pledging, for we are continually pledging in our every day life. The Church must operate God's way. Just before the text we read that He went into the Temple, and cleared out the money changers, and they hated Him for that!

PRAYER

Our Lord, and Our Master, teach us how to live, turning our attention away from self; turning our thoughts from customs and fashions that are of the world, and help us to live honestly and completely, as near as we may, in an environment of sin, as thou hast taught us in Thy Holy Word, which is forever sealed in heaven, and of which not one jot or tittle shall pass till all be fulfilled. God help us to realize anew that this Book, Thy Book, is our pass Book into the Kingdom of Heaven; that we may live by it, and through it seek entrance into the joy of the Lord. We ask it in Christ's Name. Amen.

CHAPTER X

SUFFERING BECAUSE OF INJUSTICE

Text: "But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours."—Luke 20:14.

Jesus was teaching in The Temple. A teacher requires a subject in order to teach. What subject was Jesus teaching? He was teaching the Word of God. He was teaching the Scriptures of God, for we read in connection with the text of His that He opened the Scriptures, and "beginning with Moses and the prophets, *He taught the WHOLE Scriptures,*" not an abbreviated Scripture; not an emaciated Scripture; not that part of the Scripture which He selected that would make Him popular with the preachers or His congregation; not that part of the Scriptures that would make it easy for Him to follow, and perhaps speak of some of the hardships that He had met during His earlier ministry and His earlier service,—He taught the *WHOLE* Scripture! And that is what we need today, for there is an attitude abroad to select certain parts of Scripture that is most convenient! God does not call for a selection like that. God does not call on us to select that part of the Scriptures that will be in harmony with our own business engagements, or that part of the Scriptures that suits our own personal individual conveniences. That is not following the Master's example, and we read that He is our example, and

He said, "Follow me," and He, beginning with Moses and the prophets, taught the whole Scripture.

He was doing something else. He was not only teaching the whole Scripture, but *He read the connections with His message*. That is, He was preaching the Gospel. Now, what is Gospel? What is preaching? The Gospel is "Good News." That's what the word means. It is an abbreviation of two words, "Good News." When do we get our first conception of Good News, in its finest and purest sense? It was when the angel choir came over the Judean hills and sang the chorus saying that the Son of God was born in a stable in Bethlehem. Good News! That's what the Gospel means.

He must have been speaking about Himself and His mission for coming into the world. He was speaking of Himself! Teaching the whole Scriptures. Preaching the Gospel concerning His own mission. He was *speaking for the Church*. They say to Him, "Where do you get your authority for teaching the Scripture; for teaching the Gospel?" And He, knowing what was in their innermost souls, and reading what was back in the remotest recesses of their minds, he put them to shame as He said, "Let me first ask you a question." In other words, "Let me ask you a question before I answer yours. You are asking me by what authority I do these things." He knew by what authority He did them. He knew the authority was resident in Him and could not be questioned. So He said to them, let me ask you a question. "The Baptism of John! Was it an act from heaven or was it an act from men?" I can just imagine those old Pharisees and Church leaders, looking into each other's eyes, and I can just imagine them saying, "Better be careful how we answer that, because if we say that the baptism

of John was from heaven, He will come right back at us and say, 'Then why don't you believe what John said'." You remember John said, "There cometh one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "Better be careful" they said. And we had better not say that the Baptism of John is just an act of man. The populace had canonized John, or else the people would never have said that John was a prophet, and if these Pharisees have taken the liberty of criticizing a man who had been honored with the distinction of a prophet, they would "get in bad" with the crowd. Then, when the spokesman said, "We cannot answer your question," then Jesus said to them, "Then I am under no obligation to answer yours. Since you refuse to answer my question, you will certainly be fair to me, and allow me to refuse to answer yours."

Then Jesus gave them the Parable which I read in your hearing of the owner of the farm which the farm owner decided to sublet. He turned the farm over to the tenants and then he goes away to another section of the country to live, and according to the agreement, he is to receive a certain amount of the proceeds from the farm. After the tenants have harvested the crops, he sends a servant in his employ to the farm to bring back his part of the proceeds, and the tenants, seeing the servant of the owner of the farm coming, abuse him and send him back empty. The second servant is sent and he is treated likewise. And then the third is sent and he is treated in the same fashion. And the owner of the farm becomes disturbed and he says to his son, "I want you to go over to that farm and see what the trouble is. I have sent three ser-

vants to the tenants of the farm, and they have all been ill treated. Certainly they will respect you, for you are my son." But when the tenants saw the son coming, they agreed among themselves to kill him and appropriate the farm to themselves. And when the owner heard of this last cruel treatment he dispossessed the tenants of the farm and let it to others to work it on a more reputable basis.

That story has two or three very important lessons for us to learn. Jesus saw that the Pharisees would see in this Parable the owner's right to the farm. They could not possibly deny it. That was the point Jesus wanted those Pharisees to recognize. *He wanted them to understand that all Creation belongs to God.* Now, when He intends to recognize His claim upon us by virtue of the fact that we have been created by the Almighty, and by virtue of the fact that we have been purchased with a price of His Son, we are as His servants, being created and adopted, and every soul here and everywhere belongs to Him. If I belong to God, then God knows my needs, my thoughts, my mind. If I belong to God, then all I have,—my talents, my time, my possessions, all likewise belong to God. That is as logical as any logical statement you ever read. Look at your business! Is it from it that you are getting your living for yourself and your family? You belong to God! Then you are compelled to say that your business belongs to God. Look at your profession! From it you maintain your family and your loved ones. If you belong to God, common sense, and reason and logic demands that you say, "My profession belongs to me and I belong to God." Reason demands that we acknowledge ownership to God of ourselves, and all that is associated with ourselves.

Christ settled in His heart and His mind, when He saw those representative Church leaders and their followers, that they wanted everything for themselves, and he appraised them of the fact that they belonged to God. They could not deny it. God had a right to their ownership even as the farmer had the right to the farm.

Another lesson. *He wanted to call their attention to the patience of the owner.* The owner of the farm was very patient. He sent his servants, one after another, and then finally he sent his own son whom they killed. O how patient, God the owner of Israel had been with Israel. He loved them and yet they forgot Him. But when they stood on the shores of the Red Sea, with the approaching Egyptian Army in the rear, and began to go through by faith and prayer, God came in and opened the waters of the Red Sea, and they crossed over dry shod. When in the wilderness their pitiable supply of meal was exhausted, God's prophets then come to their deliverance and furnish them with other food. Just run through the Old Testament. Over and over again God said to His servant Israel that he would ever deliver them, and a great deal of patience was required on the part of Israel.

Another lesson that he wanted to teach them was that Christ would support them. He knew that they wanted their own way. They felt that they had a perfect right to their own way. They not only wanted to recognize that they owned themselves but that they had a perfect right to their own way. He knew that the people wanted first claim to everything belonging to them and that they wanted their own way. He wanted to show them that everything belonged to God and that God would have His own way.

The last thing I want to call your attention to is this: *That there was a Judgment Day in this Parable.* After the patience of the owner of the farm was exhausted, there came the judgment. The tenant of the farm was not only dispossessed, but he was destroyed, because he had committed murder, and he had refused to recognize the claim of the real owner and so he was dispossessed and destroyed and another farmer was found to take it, so it might continue to produce successfully. That tenant farmer was destroyed for not recognizing God's claims. That was the lesson He wanted to teach. By virtue of the fact that they wanted their own way, they brought judgment upon themselves.

The conclusion of the whole matter is that we may disown the ownership of God of ourselves and all that goes with it; we may ignore God who is loving and patient with us; we may destroy the usefulness of His servants by criticizing or otherwise. We will get rewarded for our work for Him who recognizes His claims and who work according to His plans. Jesus suffers today because of those who disown Him by denying the claims of God.

The Church of Jesus Christ will be triumphant over those who refuse to recognize the claims of Christ, and they, like the tenant farmer, will be destroyed, while those who work, recognizing God's claims, and seek to work God's way, will be those who get rewarded, and who will continue forever in the presence of the Lord.

CHAPTER XI

SUFFERING FROM TREACHERY

Text: "Behold the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table."—Luke 22: 21.

Betrayed in the house, or home of a friend. We read in the Gospel that at the Passover time the question arose as to where Christ and His Disciples would celebrate the Lord's Supper, or the Passover Feast. They knew they would not be welcomed at the celebration in the established Jewish Church. In the Gospel, we read that Jesus, replying to their question, advised them to go into the city, and there they would find a certain man who would have a guest chamber all ready prepared. All they would have to do would be to say to the man whom they would meet: "Where is your guest chamber, as the Master would desire it, where He may celebrate with us the Passover Feast." The man must have been a friend of Jesus,—he must have been,—whoever he was,—his name is not mentioned. He must have been one who Jesus knew would not say "No" when the request came for the use of the guest chamber. The occasion, then, to which the text refers, was being held at the home of a friend of Jesus. It was a most solemn and religious feast when they were celebrating the momentous occasion, and that awful incident in Israel's history, when they had spent their last night in bondage in Egypt, when every Israelite looked into the home of his neighbor Egyptian to find his eldest dead, and when he

looked on his own family, he found them alive. The Passover angel has "passed over" and spared God's peculiar and chosen people. They observed the day as a day of commemoration.

A traitor in the house of a friend! At a most solemn religious service! Can anything be baser and blacker than that! And the traitor was one of his own select company. As I read and re-read the life of Christ, I am perfectly aroused by this suggestion that He is hurt more in the house of His friends and in the place of religious celebration than even outside such places. It must have appealed to Mark in some such fashion as this, for much different from the others in naming the Apostles, He named Peter first and Judas last. He must have had in mind how keenly hurt was the Master that the first selected of the chosen Disciples denied Him and cursed Him, and the last selected was practically a traitor in the company. He must have suffered more from this than from the pressure of the thorn crown. He must have suffered more from this than from the penetrating nails in His hands and feet, or from the thrust of the spear in His side. Suffering from treachery!

The first quotation that presents itself to our minds as we thus speak is perhaps this: In making the selection of the Twelve, did Jesus know before the time of the selection, and at the selection, *did He know the character of Judas Iscariot?* Those who would limit Jesus in any way would answer you by saying that He did not know the character of Judas Iscariot prior to his selection. Well, let us see the Scriptures as the best answer to any question that arises in the mind of any one trying to find God. Let us turn to the Gospel of John and read

"But there are some of you who believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him."—John 6:64.

That's sufficient proof! Let us turn to the Gospel of John, 6th Chapter, 70th Verse, and read:

"Jesus answered them (His disciples were questioning Him) Have not I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil?"

Is that not proof enough that he knew? Let us turn again to John 13: 18:

"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen; but that the scripture may be fulfilled, he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."

Those who undertake to limit the Divine origin; those who undertake to limit the power and personality of Jesus Christ in any way, say that this showed His lack of Omniscience in selecting a man like Judas as one of His Company. Now, if you and I as believers, and if we are genuine believers, if we will consider the Scriptures as being the inspired word of God, one statement would be sufficient to convince us of that fact. Now, those who would limit Jesus,—limit him on the basis of the number of references made to a given fact. The same class of persons would say that Jesus was limited in His knowledge; that He did not know the character of Judas. There are three definite witnesses that He did. There are those who would limit the Resurrection of our Lord as expressly stated by the Four authors of the Gospels, and repeated thereafter by Paul and Peter,—four more witnesses, and yet these same people refuse the bodily resurrection of our Lord,—they refuse it two; they refuse it three, they refuse it four. We might give them a hundred wit-

nesses and they would not believe. All right! You and I are agreed that Jesus did know.

Now, from this statement there comes another claim of great importance. *If He did know, why then was Judas made a Disciple.* We know that all four of the Gospels record the fact of him being called to be an Apostle. He is called by three distinct names: Matthew and Mark call him "Betrayed"; Luke calls him "Traitor," and John, "Devil." Why was such a character chosen. There are those who say He was chosen for the purpose of teaching us that He would even tolerate a militant devil in His own group of associates; that He would tolerate militant evil even in the Church,—in other words, that He tolerated the presence of Judas to teach a lesson, but that He never approved. While He tolerated him for a little time, I want to call your attention to the fact that Jesus never cast Judas away. If, like Peter, Judas had come repentant to Jesus in the right way, Jesus would have forgiven him. Jesus never cast Judas away. Judas cast himself away. Now it may be that we can tolerate in the Church those who disbelieve in the Virgin Birth of Christ, and the Inspired Scriptures and the bodily Resurrection, maybe they claim a right to stay in the church. My answer is that Judas had sense enough to get out himself. He did not wait to be put out.

There are those who say it was out of the depth of His humanity and patience. We are willing to grant this so far as it goes, for we know that the Devil was with Him from the beginning of His ministry. The Devil was there when he was denied a place in the Inn in Jerusalem; the Devil was present throughout His entire life; the Devil was with Him at the end and saw the depth of His humanity. He

put His devout, pure, holy hand in the same dish with Judas. Jesus went to the depth, went to the bottom with the sinner that He might save us from sin.

There are those who say,—and we grant this,—that he was selected to serve as a warning against a certain type of evil prevalent in the world of which Christ knew. That may be true, because the Bible is full of characters who are given to us as objects, or lessons, to warn us. Jacob deceived his father in-law,—and in his old age he died a broken hearted man,—a lesson against deception. God came to Saul and said to him, “Destroy everything that the Amalekites possess! Let not a living thing be left.” And when God asked him if he had done what he had ordered him to do, he said, “Yes.” Then the old cows began to bellow, and the sheep began to bleat, and God said, “What is this I hear? Why this mooing of the cows and this bleating of the sheep?” And Saul was rebuked from the lips of the Almighty for his lying. A lesson against deception. Jonah was advised by the Lord to go down to Nineveh and preach the Gospel to the unsaved. Jonah rebelled, and instead of going his way, he landed in the belly of a fish of the sea. A lesson of warning. The choosing of Judas as a Disciple may have been for the purpose of teaching us a lesson against greed of gold. You remember the poor woman who invested all that she had in ointment and poured it on the Master’s feet and Judas said, “It might have been sold and the money given to the poor.” A lesson against greed. It may be true, and all of these suggestions have an element of truth in them, and are brought to us for the purpose of teaching that even militant evil can associate with Christ in the shape of human beings who

put their hands in the dish with the hands of a traitor; serving as a warning to those who would sell Christ for such a paltry sum as \$16.98.

But I believe there is a deeper and more profound lesson for us than either of these. *I believe he was selected in order that the prophecy concerning Himself might be fulfilled; that the red seal of prophecy might continue unbroken to the end. Read Psalm 41: 9:*

“Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.”

David speaking of the Lord. Turn back to the Gospel of John, 13th Chapter and 18th verse:

“I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.”

But, you say, that raises another question. *If Jesus knew that Judas was a traitor before hand, why did He select him?* Listen! Fore knowledge and foreordination are two things. The fact is that Jesus knew Judas, as he looked down through the centuries, and knew that Judas would be a traitor, but the fact that He knew it, did not order that he become a traitor. Jesus knows at this very moment what your future and mine will be, but he leaves the free choice open for us, just as the door of free choice was never closed in the face of Judas until Judas wished it. He was selected to continue the red thread of prophecy, and yet notwithstanding this, he was recognized as a friend in the household of friends.

What are some of the lessons that we can gather from this part of our Lord's earthly life and ministry:

1. *That it is possible for us to be in the company of the elect, and to be in the very presence of God, and yet not approved of God.* Paul recognized that when he expressed it in the fear that notwithstanding his boldness as a preacher of the Gospel, he stood constantly in fear lest himself should be a castaway.

Listen to this! At the beginning of my ministry being active in Christian Endeavor work, one of the finest men that ever stood on any platform addressing groups of Christian Endeavorers, was a man whose name you would recognize as a power from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Just before coming to be your minister, I was holding a series of meetings in the neighborhood where this young man formerly lived, and I made inquiries as to what became of him, and I was told to my utter amazement that he had fallen physically, mentally and morally, although he had been such a power for God, and yet sinking down into the dust. The same was true of Judas.

Another thing we learn from the life of Judas is that surroundings and environment are not enough to save us. No man ever lived in a better environment than Judas. There are men who are good men so far as being true to their wives is concerned, but they may live until they are 90 and die without confessing faith in Christ. There is something more that is needed than environment. It is not enough to be kindly disposed. It is not enough to simply be a good friend. God pity the members of the family into which death has come, where the poor sorrowing soul can only say of the deceased, "He was a true, kind hearted individual." Bless your dear lives, Judas was kind hearted outwardly. He was so kind hearted that when he saw the woman

pouring oil on the head of Jesus, he said, "O what a waste! Just think of the poor house, and the food and the clothing that would purchase! Just think of the poor children!" O yes, Judas was kind hearted.

And last of all, let me call your attention to the tragical end of Judas. So far as we are able to learn from the Scriptures, *the sin of Judas began in a very small way*. Let us read John 12: 4, 5.

"Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?"

He began with envy, just by greed, which began to express itself, manifest itself in a kind hearted way. Let me call your attention to the fact that Judas knew the character of the Book, the Scriptures which Jesus was teaching. "Jesus opened the Scriptures, beginning with Moses and taught the whole Scriptures" and Judas must have been taught under Jesus instructions, so there could be no excuse for his sinful deed.

Did you ever read the description of Judas' death. The horribleness of it, and the end of all sin! We read in Acts 1: 18 that

"Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out."

Such a horrible death,—the result of sin.

That's enough, if we will only seek to glean these few lessons,—

(1) That it is possible to be in the company of God and not be saved:

(2) That it is possible to be in the very midst of evil and not be lost:

(3) That we must recognize that the little sins we are committing today will soon magnify and bring us everlasting death.

CHAPTER XII

SUFFERING RELIEVED BY LOVE

Text: "Let her alone; she has done what she could."—John 12:7.

Here our attention is drawn to the visit of Jesus in the home of His friends. In every case, throughout His earthly life and ministry, He sought to fit in with the rules and regulations and customs that were in vogue in the Jewish Church. It was the custom of those who were leaders in the Jewish Church to set aside six days before the day of the observance of the Feast of the Passover as a period of preparation for the observance of the great feast.

In keeping with this custom, Jesus comes to the home of his friends six days before the Passover for the period of preparation for the Passover Feast. Our attention is called to this very significant thing. He comes to the home of His friends voluntarily. He is now voluntarily offering Himself as a sacrifice for the world's sin. At another time, when they sought to take Him before the time was ready, using the power that was His, He escaped. I refer to the visit back to His Native town of Nazareth, when they would take Him by violence, but He miraculously escaped from their power. All those sentiments, legal sentiments, Church sentiments, ecclesiastical sentiments, were converging against Him. He could have, as often as He might, escaped from every effort. But in keeping with God's plan to give His Son as a ransom for the world's sin, in His own time, when all is ready, He

voluntarily comes to Bethany on the outskirts of Jerusalem, fully conscious of the fact that He was coming into the city for His last visit; that He was visiting His friends, as it were, for a farewell visit. The statement is simply made in another place, "Lo! I come!" That was the salutation at Bethany. He was not compelled to come. He voluntarily came, an offering for sin. He came, for these remaining days of preparation, to be with His friends.

It may be that He came, not only because of His intimate relationship with the household, but it may be that He came to Bethany to see what effect the miracle of bringing Lazarus back from the dead had upon the family and the community. At all events, we find Him in the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus for six days prior to the Feast of the Passover.

Our attention is next called to the entertainment He received at the hands of His friends. The night before His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, they make a supper for Him. They invite in others to participate in the Supper with them. There they are in a company of friends with the chief Guest as the Son of God. There is Martha serving,—waiting on the table. It was not beneath Martha to be a waiter, serving the Lord. She would prefer this to being a guest at a table in a Prince's house. There is Lazarus who was raised from the dead, in his own physical form, using his mental faculties,—a proof that he was risen from the dead. He did not retire into the wilderness, away from the city, after his resurrection. He remained at home, and in his home town, a living proof of his resurrection, and the power of Christ to raise him from the dead.

There is Mary, quiet, unassuming, patient, devout, loving Mary, who had witnessed the power that had

raised her brother back to life. There she is, attesting to the fact that she had been saved. To have anointed the *head* of a King would have been the correct thing to do, but putting it on His feet, that had made their prints in the dust from Jerusalem to Bethany,—they were sufficiently adorable to her to pour all her ointment as a token, an act of love, at His feet. No towel was near to dry them. She did not wait for that. She takes down her own long flowing hair, and she wipes dry the feet of her Master, and with the precious ointment she anoints His feet, an act of love, pure and undefiled, and the odor of the ointment fills the house. Beautiful sight! Beautiful supper! Beautiful banquet! Beautiful thoughts! Mary serving because Lazarus, her brother, is raised from the dead, sitting beside Him at the table, and in appreciation of the fact that He had brought her brother from the dead. Mary washes His feet with Holy perfume, and dries it with the hair of her head. Beautiful sight!

But, alas! There is a fly in the ointment! O, the persistence of the devil! He walked into that first garden, and he took out those first creatures. He walked into the very presence of God and he said to the Son of God, "If you are hungry, make these stones bread and satisfy your hunger." Now, into that beautiful scene at Bethany comes the devil in the form and person of that low, debased, hateful, greedy, selfish, insincere Judas, and from him they receive severe criticism, even in such a presence as this.

"Why this waste? Why not sell it and give the money to the poor?" He cared not for the poor. He was a thief. He was under the control of His Satanic Majesty, and that was the reason for his criticism and his reply. Jesus speaks just one sen-

tence,—“Let her alone.” Would to God that every critic criticizing the Church; every critic criticizing those who are doing the best they can for the up-building of the Kingdom of Christ in the hearts and lives of men would hear that word from the Master,—“Let her alone!”

Let us pause for a moment to see what she had done to meet the approval of Christ. It was an act of love. What kind of love? Well, in fact, there is but one kind, but true love expresses itself in a variety of ways and the chief of these are found in this act of Mary's.

It was a generous act! She carried it with her. She had it in her presence. It represented her all. She did not pour one drop, or 100 drops, or 10 percent, or 50 percent,—she poured it *ALL* at His feet. And then she showed her utter subjection by taking down her own hair, and wiping dry the feet of our Lord. Can you think of an act more generous than that? True love is generous, and we must not consider it in the spirit of taxation, or levy, any assistance in the things that are good.

Legend tells us the story of an old couple who came down to their old age childless. Realizing the value, the beauty, the company, and the help of a child in the home, they found a very poor family, and in it was a little girl, a dozen years old, and they made friends with her. They were wealthy, and they said to her, “We will give you a pony, and a carriage, and you can have your own room, all beautifully fitted up, we will give you everything that money can purchase if you will come to us as our child and let us adopt you.” And the old couple talked it over for a while with the little girl's father, who was a poor man with a large family, and who had to struggle to keep them all in the necessities

of life, and having the welfare of the little child at heart, he comes about to the point where he will say, "Better do it," and as he is talking the matter over with the little girl he tells her of the beautiful things she will have. He says, "You will have a beautifully furnished room instead of this old shack. You will have your own horse and carriage instead of having to play here in this narrow alley. You will have everything you desire. You had better do it." The little girl looks into her father's face, and she says, "Yes, father, but I would not have you. And I don't want to go!" Love does not set its first and greatest value on the material things of life, but on the things that are above.

In the next place, *her act was a condescending act*. And in this she was very much like her Master. If we could get rooted and grounded in our minds a conception of the condescension of Jesus Christ, there is not one of us but what would be more generous, and work more earnestly in building up His Kingdom. Heaven is pictured to us in terms of the material,—its streets of gold, its walls of jasper, no sorrow, no tears,—that which we picture as being the highest in the realm of the ideal. Jesus had all that. "I will give up my streets of gold, and I will walk the streets of Galilee! I will give up my mansions bedecked with jewels, and I will be a way-faring Man, with not one place where I can lay my head. I will spend a period of years down here with the lowest that I may show them the way up." And Mary is following in the steps of the Master by wiping away the stain of oil and dust with the hair of her head. O, how we pride ourselves and say we will not do thus and so, if we think we are serving in second place! There is but one place in the serv-

ice of the Master, and every place is first. We must recognize the need of condescension.

A boy was about to go to college, and before he went his mother said to him, "Always remember what I have taught you that in all your life, you are third." As soon as he got to college, he painted a sign and put it in his room right over the door, which read, "I am third." Everybody who came into the room wondered what it meant. It was a long time before he told them. Finally one day he said, "This is what it means: God first, others second, and I am third." Wouldn't it be well if we could put that somewhere over the doors of our lives where we could always see it. But instead of that, our motto is, "I am first, others second and God last." We need to learn the spirit of Mary. Her act of love was a condescending act.

Then there is one other thing that we need to learn about her love. *That is, that it was a fragrant love.* Everybody about her knew that the odor had been put somewhere. They knew that it was present. We cannot hide love. Can a mother hide the love for her child? If we love Christ, we will love the unsaved about us. We simply cannot get away from it. When they built the great Christian Church, Saint Sophia, in Constantinople, they mixed a lot of musk with the mortar that they used for building the church, and there are those, who, with a keen sense of smell, say they can detect, after the lapse of ages, the odor of the musk. Whether it is true or not, I do not know, but I do know this, that Christians cannot hide their love.

The act of Mary's was a generous, condescending, fragrant love which satisfied the Master. "Let her alone. She has done what she could!"

A legend of the early church says that the entrance to heaven had been discovered. One individual Christian had found his way to the gates of heaven, and found that the door posts were so near to each other, and the door so narrow that with great discomfort he was able to squeeze through.

Another man brought one other with him, and without discomfort he was able to go through.

The next man came bringing nine others, and the posts moved so far apart that he did not even recognize that they were there.

It is this that will satisfy the Master in your case and mine, as in the case of Mary, and when He is satisfied, the posts of the doors to the Kingdom of Heaven will be wide, and we will have abundance of entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

PART IV
THE SEVEN WORDS FROM THE CROSS

CHAPTER XIII

FORGIVENESS

The First Word from the Cross

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."
—*Luke 23: 34.*

Here we have two pictures presented to our minds,—one, the picture of a triumphal entry of a King into his capital city; the other picture is that of this same King expelled from his capital city and being executed in the most cruel and the vilest fashion known to men of that day. Death on the cross was a form reserved for the vilest and most contemptible criminals in the Roman World. Notwithstanding the horror and the torture He was undergoing, He utters our text as a prayer for those who are ill-treating him. There has never been in the entire history of man anything like it. Criminals being executed have never been known to have sympathy for or interest in the executioners. The text does two very distinct things.

1. *It convinces any thinking person of the fact that Jesus was different from any other man and confirms his claim and our claim that he was not only man but God.*

2. *It gives us an example of the sublimest forgiveness ever recorded by man.*

We of this audience are no doubt agreed that Jesus was the Son of God and, therefore, different from all other human beings. Therefore, we need

not spend time in discussing this question. It is a question that has been settled by those who would take time to investigate and think for more than 1900 years. Our purpose at this time will be to look at the other suggestion of the text—that of “Forgiveness.”

Over and over again we are reminded in Scripture that Christ is our example. Here we have His attitude on forgiveness, which becomes an example for us. Forgiveness is something that has a very decided bearing not only relating to the life hereafter, but on the life that we live today. How many anxious moments, heartaches and headaches are experienced by people simply because they prefer an attitude of hatred to an attitude of forgiveness.

It is related that in a certain women’s meeting, as is quite natural, the subject of the conversation turned to that of cures for various maladies. In the party was a woman who was a comparative stranger. The women chattered away, each making a suggestion as they plied their needles with their sewing. The strange woman, whose name was Mehitable Record, listening to all the other announced cures for headaches, gave the following statement: She had been unable to sleep, had a very disagreeable headache throughout the day and night. Late in the night she was repeating the things she had been doing all day, which was to find words to express her hatred for a neighbor woman whom she thought had wronged her. Finally, a thought came to her. “What if this woman has said these harsh things about me, if it is true I ought to appreciate it, and if it is wrong it cannot hurt me and I ought to forgive her and,” said she, “I resolved right then and there on my bed to forgive her. My attitude of mind was

changed, my headache left, I slept the remainder of the night. Taking this as a lesson I have followed it. Every time I have a headache or feel disagreeable I try to find someone to forgive and am relieved." She was asked if she always found persons enough to forgive every time she felt bad and she said "Yes," for she found that when she exercised the attitude of forgiveness and as her list ran smaller, her pains were fewer and that she had not been sick for forty-five years. The women expressed a vote of thanks to her for her suggestion. Hatred harms,—forgiveness helps. But we want to analyze this prayer briefly.

1. *For whom did He pray.* It was for the vilest perpetrators of crime. In doing this He was in keeping with His attitude in life. Though He was the Son of God, He did not retire from the crowd, but mingled with it and touched them in their life of sin, as we read He touched the leper, vile as he was, and the leprosy left. We read of a Hindu leper, sitting beside the road, whom a missionary approached, laying his hand on his head he wished him well. The poor outcast leper went running along the road shouting "A human has touched me." In our leprosy of sin we may shout "A God has touched us" for Christ touched us in our infirmity of sin when he prayed for its forgiveness.

Governor Stuart, of Missouri, called before him a disreputable criminal for the purpose of pardoning him. This prisoner was an older man, a Captain of a river steamboat when Governor Stuart was a boy. The Captain was cruel to the boy and with a large stick would drive him out of his bunk at five o'clock in the morning. Stuart never forgot it, and one who had treated him cruelest, but now that he was in a position he wanted to show his real spirit

of forgiveness. He simply said to the criminal Captain: "Today I give you your freedom, but never again be cruel to a boy and drive him out of bed at five o'clock in the morning as you did a boy on a certain steamboat. I was that boy." Stuart forgiving the one who had treated him cruelest showed a Christ attitude.

King George Fourth of England sent for the Bishop of Winchester by a messenger, notifying him to come to the palace to administer communion. The messenger delayed enroute and the Bishop was late in reaching the palace. The Bishop related to the King the reason for the late arrival. The King was angry, sent for the messenger, rebuked him bitterly, then turned to the Bishop and said "Now we will go ahead with the communion." The Bishop said "No, you are not in the proper frame of mind, —Christ prayed for those who offended him." The King sent for the messenger, begged his pardon, expressed forgiveness, then the Bishop administered communion. The proper spirit.

2. *He prayed when they were treating Him the worst.* They had driven nails through His hands and feet and tortured Him in the most cruel fashion; He was in intense personal agony, but it was then that He prayed for His executioners.

General Lee was riding over a section of a battlefield where he had met defeat at the hand of the Yankee Army. As he rode by, a wounded Yankee soldier, in the spirit of hatred, lifted his head and cried "Hurrah for the Union." General Lee approached him and dismounted from his horse. The Yankee soldier expected, of course, that Lee would shoot him, but instead Lee said, "I am sorry, sir, that you are so severely wounded. I hope you may soon be well." Said the soldier, "That spirit

broke my heart and I cried myself to sleep." Just when he was receiving the worst treatment from the Yankee, Lee forgave him and wished a prayer for him.

Sometimes our attitude of forgiveness is upside down. Two girls quarreled. The mother of one tells her the story of Christ's forgiveness. That night this girl in her prayer prays as follows: "God please forgive me for speaking angrily today to Charlotte." So far so good,—but then she adds: "Make Charlotte come and ask my forgiveness, give her no rest day or night till she does." That is not the spirit in which Christ prayed.

Two Church deacons quarreled. One of them is desperately ill. The family, wishing reconciliation, sent for the other deacon. He comes, enters the room, the sick deacon extends his hand, they shake hands, express forgiveness, have prayer. As the well deacon leaves the room the sick one following him with his eye says, as he is leaving the door: "But, John, you know if I get well the grudge holds."

3. *He prayed that their sins might be forgiven,* which meant He desired to have them removed as far as the east is from the west and buried in the depths of the sea—forgotten.

Two boys playing, fall out and fight. The next day one boy grabs his hat and says he is going out to play. The mother asks with whom and he replied, "With Roland." "What," says the mother, "after your quarrel of yesterday, going out to play with him again?" The boy hesitated a moment, then replied: "Ho! mother, Roland and me are good forgetters."

4. *The prayer reveals His mercy.* He was under no obligation even to pray for us, much less to suffer

for us, and yet we read it was not His will that one of us should perish in sin.

5. *It was a prayer for others.* He was not thinking of Himself, but of His executioners. Who of us can pray such a prayer when unjustly suffering at the hands of others? In the moment of that suffering could we pray for them? He is our example.

6. *It was a perpetual prayer* and is still being prayed as He waits at the right hand of God today as our intercessor. When Billy Sunday came to Philadelphia, I was invited, with the other ministers of the city, to a reception given Mr. Sunday at the Y. M. C. A. A prominent citizen of the city, who knew practically every minister in town personally by name, stood beside Mr. Sunday and introduced us by name as we came along. When introduced we shook his hand, received his smile and passed on into the beautiful auditorium. I thought at the time, this splendid layman introducing us to Mr. Sunday and passing us on into the beautiful auditorium was a simple example of what Christ would do for us some day. He, knowing us, will introduce us to the Father and such an introduction will pass us on into the joys of Heaven.

A great and noble minister dreams that he has died and passed on to the gate of heaven where he is being questioned before being admitted. He is asked, —“Are you righteous?” “No.” “Have you always been kind?” “No.” “Have you always been forgiving?” “No.” He found himself compelled to answer “No” to every question and was in the throes of despair, expecting momentarily to be thrown out, when there approached One with beautiful countenance, glory shining in His face, who stepped into the presence of the Judge and said,

“Father, I know this man. He has his imperfections, but he did the best he could to serve Me down on the earth. I will be responsible for him. Admit him.” And as he felt himself entering heaven he awoke out of his sleep.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ANSWER TO A ROBBER'S PRAYER

The Second Word from the Cross

"Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke 23:43.

The picture is that of two robbers being executed with the Christ at the Crucifixion. Their attitude is opposite. One is spurning the Christ in bitterness, taking his position with the executioners. The other one, and the one we are interested in just now, was taking his position against the executioners and with the executed One. In his agony he prays for relief for himself. There are certain elements in this prayer that call forth the forgiveness that followed.

1. *His confession of sin.* It is stated that a prince, going through his domain, visited a certain jail where there were a large number of his subjects in prison. As he passed through, he began to ask the cause for their imprisonment. One said he was innocent but the jury was paid to convict him. Another said he was there for doing things his firm should have suffered for. One by one a large number made excuses and claimed their innocence. Finally, the prince found one who said he was there because he had stolen goods and had nobody to blame but himself. He had made a thief out of himself and was suffering justly for so doing. The prince looked him in the face and said: "You rogue, what are you doing in here with so many of

these innocent people? This will never do. You will corrupt their morals. You are pardoned." This man confessed his guilt and received pardon, —the others excused themselves and remained in prison. The thief on the cross confessed his sin to Christ and received His pardon.

2. *He repented.* Now, facing death, he was sorry he had rejected the Christ and realized this rejection had brought him to the position he was now in. A little girl being asked to give a definition of repentance said, "It is being sorry enough to quit." I asked my communicants' class last week what they thought repentance for sin meant. A boy replied, "It is feeling rotten because we did it." A little lad and his mother attended a revival service in a Methodist Church. The mother went home quite delighted because she said a certain man was under conviction of sin. The boy protested and said no. The mother was surprised and asked his reason. He said, "Why, mother, didn't you see he was only down on one knee?" When we are repentant for our sins we will be down on both knees. Did you ever realize why it is more people are not repentant for sin. It is because they do not realize their own lost condition. A mother in a certain community lost her little girl and looking everywhere failed to find her. A revival meeting is in progress in the Church. She sends in word and asks the minister to announce the fact that Mary Brown was lost, asking if she was there. The minister asked if Mary Brown was there,—that she was lost,—if so, to stand. No one stood. At the close of the service he spoke to a little girl on the front seat, asked her her name and she said it was Mary Brown. "Why," said the minister, "didn't you stand? Your mother is looking for you, think-

ing you are lost." Said the little girl, "Oh! I thought you meant some other Mary Brown." We think others are lost, but fail to realize it is ourselves. Conviction is not repentance. It is one thing to be called at five o'clock in the morning,—it is another thing to get up.

3. *This robber had faith.* One of the sweetest little instances of faith I have run across lately was of a grandfather who lived in his son's home where there was a granddaughter. Of course he was very fond of her. One morning as he was about to leave for work his little girl called him in the play room. She had taken a box of crackers he had brought her the day before, putting them in the form of letters to spell out the sentence "Grandpop, I want another box of crackers." In the evening when he returned, before he had time to do anything else, the little girl called him again to her room. She had taken the same crackers and arranged them in letters to spell "Grandpop, I thank you for the other box of crackers." This she had done through the day, knowing he would bring them. That is faith.

There is a story related of a woman who was so godly her reputation spread far and near. Finally, a worldly woman in trouble decided to go and see this godly woman. When she met her she said, "Are you the woman with so great faith?" The reply was, "No, I am the woman with little faith in a great God." If we have little faith in a great God we have the assurance of answered prayer. An orphan girl in Kara, India, fearing she was about to be sold into slavery, appeals to the matron of a missionary home for entrance. There is no room. The missionary tells her to pray that more money will be provided, and goes on her itinerary back to the home. That night she prays. The morning mail

brought a liberal contribution of American money. The matron of the missionary home immediately started a messenger to go and bring the orphan Kara girl. It was supposed to be a full day's journey but the messenger returned at noon with the girl. They were surprised. He said he had met the Kara girl about half way. Then the Kara girl spoke up and said, "You said missionary you would pray and I prayed so I thought I had just as well start early in the morning and I did." That is faith.

4. *The character of the prayer.*

(a) *It was short and to the point.* It is not for logic or rhetoric that we will be heard. Christ emphatically told the Pharisees so. A traveling business man is invited to attend a prayer meeting and hear one of the most learned and eloquent men in Boston. He accepts. During the prayer meeting the pastor had spoken eloquently and splendidly, but a rather poorly dressed, untutored man had taken the opportunity to pray in the meeting. Going home with his cultured friend, he was asked what he thought of the pastor's address. He replied it was eloquent, rhetorical, logical, beautiful, but it was the prayer of that poorly dressed man that made an impression on him."

(b) *It was humble.* All he asked was to be remembered. It was in the spirit of the Publican who prayed "God be merciful to me a sinner." Let us remember that a fly in Noah's Ark was as safe as an elephant. It is not through the exercising of big things necessarily that we will be heard.

(c) *It was earnest.* It could not be otherwise when he realized his condition and the short duration of life. This is the kind of praying needed. A native Chinese Christian speaking in this country advised our missionary board to send missionaries

to China that laid hot interest in prayer. Prayer that is in earnest will express itself in action. A deacon constantly prayed at prayer meeting like this, "Lord, touch the unsaved with Thy finger." One night while praying the Lord said to him, "Thou art the finger." He went out, began personal work, and won many for Christ.

5. *The answer.*

(a) *Now*, today, Christ heard him while He was suffering on the cross. If He heard in the midst of suffering, how much more now in the midst of glory?

(b) *It was instantaneous.* A request presented, an answer forthwith. It was so with Paul, Matthew and Peter. They offered no discussion when invited. To the Christ it is an act of a moment.

6. *The praying robber rebukes the unrepentant robber.* The one who prays properly will abhor sin and rebuke it. Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man." Elijah said to Gehazi, "You art guilty and shall be covered with leprosy."

7. *One robber was taken,—one was lost.* This is what Christ tells us will happen at the Judgment. Families will be divided. A friend of mine at a revival service visited the leading lawyer of the town. Abruptly he said to the lawyer, "I understand you and your wife are going to separate." The lawyer was furious. Then my friendly evangelist explained what he meant, for his wife was a godly woman and the lawyer an ungodly man. It brought him to his senses.

CHAPTER XV

CHRIST AND HIS MOTHER

The Third Word from the Cross

"Woman, behold thy son—behold thy mother."—John 19: 26, 27.

The Son of God here is exemplifying the ideal of the true son of man. He recognizes His mother, and in this last moment of His earthly life he plans for her welfare.

In this attitude toward His mother, we have the ideal that ought to exist in the life of every one for mother. There are three things in particular suggested in this incident of our Lord's life worthy of our consideration today.

1. *He knew His mother's love for Him.* He knew there was no love in all the world, humanly speaking, greater than a mother's love for her son.

In the days of slavery, a good-hearted man purchased the freedom of a slave mother five different times and gave her her liberty, and as many times she resold herself into slavery in order that she might be with her son who was a slave. This is the true instinct in every mother. She is always willing to sell herself into slavery for her child.

One of the most fascinating stories told in the magazines is that of a Frenchman who falls in love with a beautiful woman. While the woman is beautiful in appearance, she is not beautiful in personality or character. The young Frenchman's

mother is not pleased with her son's relation with the girl. Finally the young Frenchman proposes marriage. The girl is very reluctant in giving her consent. Ardent in his love, he asks her what he could give her in order to secure an affirmative answer to his marriage proposal. He declares he will give her anything she may ask. The young woman in question has learned that the young Frenchman's mother does not approve of her as a wife for her son. In order to get vengeance upon one who dislikes her, and to get the mother out of the way, this cruel woman said to the young Frenchman, "Give me the heart of your mother." In a frenzy of love for the girl, he murders his mother, opens her breast, takes out her heart and is taking it to the woman he loves. As he is going to deliver his own mother's heart to this outrageous girl, he stumbles and falls. The story says that there came out of that mother's heart a voice that said, "My son, are you hurt?" This is extravagant, but it is not at all an extreme picture of a mother's love. She will love, even when murdered by her own children. Jesus knew the length, the breadth, the height, and the depth of His mother's love for Him.

2. *He also knew the extent of her care for Him as a result of her love.* It is said that when Woodrow Wilson was Governor of New Jersey, he signed a requisition to return a man to Baltimore who had deserted his wife and children. During his absence, the wife had spent all her savings to keep her little family together and had added all she could by her own earnings. Finally, in desperation, while working in a hospital, she learns that they have need of blood for transfusion in order to save the life of a patient. She goes to the surgeon and voluntarily offers to sell her own blood for \$25, in order to secure

additional aid for her children. Her proposition is accepted. Her blood is tested. It proves to be the proper kind needed for the patient in question. The transfusion is made and the patient recovers. When some one commented on the willing, generous way in which she gave her blood for a stranger, she replied, "I will sell every drop of blood in my body to keep my children from starving." This is how a mother cares for her children. Jesus knew how great was His own mother's heart for Him.

3. *He also knew the extent of her sacrifice for Him!* He knew that she went down into the shadow in order to give Him birth! He knew the tensivity of both her mental and physical pain as she was forced to give birth in the environment of a stable. He knew how many nights her sleep and rest had been disturbed by the demands for His care .

He remembered, not only the torture in Bethlehem's manger. He remembered the weary trip back to His Nazareth home. He remembered her anxiety when He was temporarily lost on His visit to Jerusalem. He knew her ambitions for Him in His humble Nazareth home. He knew that no sacrifice would be too great for her to make for Him.

A poor woman, interested in the welfare of her son, desiring to have him educated for the ministry, was struggling to provide for him the education necessary. While the son was away to college, the mother wrote him the following letter:

"My son, send me all the socks that have holes in them so I can mend them. Be sure and send me the ones with the biggest holes. I want to sew my heart into them, so you can walk upon my very heart."

Jesus knew that His own mother was so willing to sacrifice for Him that she would be glad to have Him walk upon her very heart. The fact is, most of us walk more often than we think upon mother's heart.

4. In the next place, *Christ saw what a son's care for his mother should be.* He not only saw a mother's love, and a mother's care, and a mother's sacrifice for her son,—He also realized what a son's care for His mother should be. He knew that mothers deserved the best care that one can give them.

A teacher in one of the public schools is explaining to her pupils the fact that all men are sinners, quoting Scripture to prove her position. When she is finished, a little lad replies saying, "My father may be a sinner, but my mother is not." That is the kind of spirit that will prompt any true son to exercise proper care of his mother. Jesus knew that we owe it to mothers from every standpoint to respect them, to reverence them. He must know that today there is a great lack of respect and reverence on the part of young men and women for their mothers.

Jesus also knew one other thing, and that was that woman's finest work in the world is to raise children so that they will rise up and call her blessed.

The relationship between child and mother was recognized by the Creator, God, from the very beginning. On Sinai's summit He outlines that relation,—*"Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."* The first commandment which Almighty God gave to which He attached a promise, is the one pointing out the relation between parent and child. Long life is promised for the

honoring of motherhood and fatherhood. It is beautiful to note that the tender relationship existing between mother and child is that which exists between God and us.

CHAPTER XVI

A GOD FORSAKEN

The Fourth Word from the Cross

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—Matthew 27: 46.

1. *A perfect human cry of pain.* Think of the horror of a son even thinking a father was forsaking him,—a father who is responsible for him, turning his back on him in neglect and in the hour of great need. This is a small illustration of the feeling Christ must have had.

2. *Forsaken by His friends.* Think of the motley crowd of Jews that stood around. Jesus came through a Jewish line and first for the Jews. It was these who were rejecting Him. The Jew today will tell us it was the Roman who crucified Christ. Even so, it was at the instigation of the Jews. There is no sadder thing than to be deserted and rejected by a friend. I know a woman, the mother of four children. She and her husband began life in one room,—worked hard and well together,—amassed a small fortune,—educated their children, sent them abroad, did everything for them. After the husband's death every child turned against the mother and it was my duty to sit in court and hear them testify cruelly against their mother and to see her heart-broken expression. This mother is a picture of what was taking place on the cross. Jesus

forsaken by those for whom He had given most—Himself.

3. *How do we forsake Him?*

(a) *By a persistent search after wealth.* Wealth is good and I find nothing in Scripture to prevent us having it if secured under right conditions and properly used. It is when we put it first that the danger comes. A gold miner in returning from Alaska with a large nugget of gold in his possession, looking forward to spending the remainder of his life in ease. The vessel encounters a severe storm off Seattle. The passengers are being taken off in life boats. When face to face with death this miner throws aside his bag in which he has the gold nugget as if it were chaff. At this moment it was no good,—of no value to him, though he had risked his life for it. At death, wealth will be valueless and yet we are forsaking the Christ for it.

(b) *By an undue search after pleasure.* Pleasure is good. God intends us to enjoy life. There is no such thing as morbid, sordid Christianity. If anyone thinks that the more they deprive themselves of real life the better Christian they are, they are wrong. It is when we put pleasure in the place of God and give it the first place and the most attention that the danger comes. I have read of an outing party being taken from the shore in a small boat to spend the day on the summit of an iceberg. All the while they are sporting on the iceberg it is floating southward. It gets into the Gulf Stream. Underneath where a large part of the berg is concealed the warm current is melting it away. It overturns and all are lost. Many today are sporting on the surface of that which seems secure but an under-

current is melting away the strength of manhood and womanhood, and ultimately it will fall. Forsaking Christ for pleasure is dangerous.

(c) *In seeking ease.* This applies to those who call themselves Christians, thinking that membership in the Church is all that is necessary, in spite of the fact that Scripture declares: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." The spirit of indifference today is the result of forsaking Christ for ease. What would you have thought of the man who warned Johnstown that the dam had broken, if, instead, when he saw the beginning of the break he had remained secure on the mountain side without ever warning the sleeping population? Great would be your scorn for him indeed. What must God think of us when we see those sleeping with the flood of sin breaking loose and we are remaining at ease doing nothing to arouse them.

(d) *We forsake Him by seeking to please ourselves* for a time and agreeing to take Him later. Forsaking God,—thinking of self. Prairie dwellers seeing fire approaching, burn off a space and gather themselves together in the space burned off. As the wind drives the furious fire and it reaches the burned space, it travels around them and they are saved. Christ is the burned space in which we are saved.

(e) *Because we do not think.* Meditate on His cry,—realize what it means, and surely we cannot be indifferent. A London waif is picked up by a worker and told of a house of refuge. He is told to go, ring the bell, and when the door opens he is simply to say, "In His name." That would be the password that would introduce him and admit him. The boy goes and is admitted. Later while selling

papers he is hurt on the street. Taken to a hospital when asked his name he said, "In His name." As he is dying in the hospital he looks up and his last word is "In His name." There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved but the name of Christ.

CHAPTER XVII

COMMUNION

The Fifth Word from the Cross

"I thirst."—*John 19:28.*

There are two kinds of thirst,—physical and spiritual,—both experienced by all. The spiritual thirst is the most intense. The soul has ever cried, "If I die shall I live again?" Christ's thirst, while undoubtedly physical, has also a spiritual meaning, in the following way:

1. *He thirsted. He was drinking our cup of woe.* What awful pain it must have been! Think of the weight of His body hanging on the nails. Back in the councils of heaven He knew this hour would come, and throughout Scripture there is the red thread leading to it. The Alpine Club found spurious ropes were being used by guides,—unsafe and causing death. They caused to be made a special rope to be used by the guide and in order to detect this special rope a red thread was woven into it. Christ's suffering on the cross calls our attention to the red thread woven into the rope that saves us from sin.

In the earlier days of our country, New England settlers built a stockade in each settlement. In the center was a high pole, on the top of which was a torch, it being agreed among them that when the Indians approached someone would climb the pole and light the torch. Other settlers seeing this, would

rush to their assistance. One village was surprised by Indians. To do it now meant death from the Indian arrow. But seeing the plight of the villagers a man decides to climb the pole, light the torch and take the chance. He does it and just as the torch is lit an Indian poison arrow pierces his body and he falls dead, but neighboring settlers seeing the burning torch rush to their assistance and the villagers are saved. Christ lit the torch that brought villagers of heaven to save us from the mad riot of sin.

2. *He thirsted to fulfill his mission.* He declared while seated on the curb of Jacob's well, "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me." In other words, He would rather fulfill His mission of being the Saviour than to eat, though tired and hungry. Now He realizes He is near the goal and thirsts to find it. Barabbas, the vile robber released, had the best idea of the Atonement of any one in Jerusalem at the time of Christ's crucifixion. As he stood on the outskirts of the crowd he could say, "That man is dying in my place. I deserve death,—He does not, but the mob released me and took Him. He is substituted for me."

An old-time Christian had a practice of saying at prayer meeting constantly, "I am redeemed." One day a flippant young man asked him, "How long have you been redeemed?" He replied, curtly, "1900 years." So the fulfillment of Christ's mission, from which He thirsted, redeemed us 1900 years ago.

3. *He thirsted for the perpetrators of the crime,* showing His relationship to sinning humanity. It is the same as that of a mother longing for a convicted son. A child in a home dies of scarlet fever. The mother insists on kissing her child. She kisses

her dead child, contracts the fever and dies. A simple example of Christ's love for us. He saw us dead in sin, kissed us in our poison and died as the result on the cross. If you will take a piece of red cloth and look at it through red glass it will appear white. Our sins are scarlet, but viewed through the red blood of Calvary they have become white. "Though your sins be red like crimson, they shall be as white as wool."

I have heard of a certain king who issued an order declaring the first offender would be punished by having both eyes put out. His own son, unconsciously, is the first offender. When the son is brought before the father he is amazed and hurt, but his word must be kept, so he orders one of his son's eyes to be removed and one of his own eyes removed,—the two eyes have been removed, but the son can see. Christ was the eye of God plucked out that we might be saved.

4. *He thirsted for heaven*, undoubtedly longing to go back. A child is asked how much it loved its mother. It replies, "All the way to the stars and back again." Jesus loved us all the way from the stars to the earth and back to the stars. A traveller is crossing the Alps, going up the rugged Swiss side. Approaching near the top he exclaims at the great beauty behind him. The guide replies, "Yes, it is beautiful, but wait till you see the other side,—it is a mass of flowers,"—referring to the beauty of the Italian side. This old world is beautiful, but the other side is a mass of flowers. Christ thirsted to get back to the Garden of God.

5. *He thirsts now to have us accept Him*. He is constantly knocking at the door of our hearts. In sections of Switzerland an isolated road is marked by little crosses. As long as the traveller keeps in

sight of the crosses he is going in the right direction. When travellers through this life keep in sight of the Cross, in the right sense, it is a sign we are going in the right direction.

CHAPTER XVIII

A PLAN COMPLETED

The Sixth Word from the Cross

"It is finished."—*John 19:3.*

It is impossible, on the day that is commonly called "Good Friday," to think of anything else than the closing scenes of our Lord's earthly life. I know nothing that would be of greater value for individual Christians and for Churches than to get a renewed vision of the Christ on Calvary.

One beautiful morning a few years ago, about ten o'clock in the morning, I stood on the summit of Mount Calvary. I faced the Holy City, Jerusalem. I tried to picture in my mind the events in the last dark hours of our Lord's life before His crucifixion.

I saw Him in the different trials; I saw Him before Pilate; I saw the angry crowd outside demanding His execution; I saw Pilate in mental agony, not knowing what to do. He read no evidence that would lead him to condemn this innocent man before him. He did not have the moral courage to use the power in his command and disperse the angry mob outside. I see him perform the silly task of washing his hands in a basin of water, thereby declaring his innocence, and throwing all the responsibility on the mob.

I saw the man of Galilee, who had healed the sick; befriended the needy; raised the dead; quieted

the storm,—who had been benevolent and kind in every respect, turned over to the jeering mob. So little time elapses between the mock trial before Pilate and the execution, the crowd must have been prepared. Almost immediately we see them headed for Calvary, forcing Christ, Who had been under a tremendous strain for hours, to carry a great wooden cross. I see Him fall beneath its weight. I see the jeering mob force a friend to carry it for Him. I see them arrive at Calvary. I see there two other crosses. I see the jailer appear with the other two prisoners. I see the holes dug at the foot of each cross. I see the Roman Centurion and I hear him giving orders to carry out the execution. Such a tragedy the world has never seen. The sun refuses to look on the event! The nerves of the earth are shocked! Calvary's summit trembled like an aspen leaf! The rocks on the slopes are rent asunder! Graves nearby are opened! Some one comes in excitement from the Temple saying, "The veil of the Temple has mysteriously been rent in twain!" The execution is soon over! "It is finished!" The plan of redemption from sin for man is finished.

In particular, however, it will be worth noticing that the following things were finished:

1. The prophecy is fulfilled as declared in Genesis 3: 15, 16, that the seed of a woman should bruise the head of the serpent. That was the first promise that a Redeemer should come who would pay the penalty for sin and set the sinner free. Everything beyond that point up to Calvary is now completed and fulfilled. The Deliverer has been given. He has come! He has finished His task at the Cross.

2. *God's plan of redemption for a world of sinners has been completely revealed to man.* It is God's plan,—not man's! It is the only plan! No

other plan has been given or can be given. It is a plan that calls for repentance, confession and service, on the part of those who are to benefit by the plan.

3. *It is a plan of redemption finished for ALL men.* No man is exempt. It is a plan for the negro; the Indian; the Hindu; the Chinaman; the millionaire; the pauper; the cultured and the uncultured. There is no power capable of placing a limit on the plan of redemption wrought through Christ on Calvary. The only one who has power to limit it, is the individual who will refuse to accept it. In other words, only the stubborn will of sinful man can exclude man from the scope of the plan of redemption.

4. *It was finished in its entirety by His going all the way to Calvary.* He has left nothing unsaid that man needs to hear for his welfare; He has left nothing undone that man needs for his welfare. He showed us the whole way, and best of all, what awaited us at the end of the way. He said, "In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am, ye may be also." That's the end of the way. And in order that we may arrive at this end, He has given us, in a single sentence, full instructions, when He said,—“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God.” If we would follow Him, we are compelled to do as He did. He went all the way for us. We must go all the way for Him.

5. *It was the finishing of His mission in the world.*

(a) He came to teach us how to live, in our relation to God. He came to teach us how to live

in our relation to each other. He came to teach us how to live in order to put the best things into this life and get the best things out of this life and be prepared for a better life. This He had done during His life. He finished it at Calvary.

(b) He came to show us the way back to heaven. He left no stone unturned in doing this. He literally blazed the trail from earth to heaven, as mountain travelers blaze the trail to find the way back home. The plan of salvation is finished. God is satisfied; man is satisfied. No man accepting this plan of salvation will ever be dissatisfied with it. It is a plan for you and for me. There is no other plan. Only by living according to this plan will we be permitted, when we come down to the sunset of life, behold Him standing at the dawn of Eternal life, ready to say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

CHAPTER XIX

RESIGNATION

The Seventh Word from the Cross

"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Luke 23: 46.

We have in these last words from the Cross, four important lessons:

1. *We learn that the soul, or spirit, outlives the body.* In our actions we seem to reverse the order, for we treat the body as if it were to live, and the Spirit, as if it would pass away. Who of us would send our family away in the morning without physical food? But how many of us send our families away without Spiritual food! The table on which the Spiritual food was once found, is now deserted. I refer to the family altar.

It will help us at this time to have a few practical proofs that the soul actually outlives the body, and therefore should have first attention, rather than the body. If we can realize this, perhaps it will turn our attention, no less to the body but more to the soul. Let us proceed with great simplicity. The simplest and humblest arguments are sometimes the best. How do we know the soul is deathless? The following simple statements perhaps will help us:

(a) We know that life is continuous because we see it manifested in nature. For instance, trees, apparently dead in winter, come to life in the spring.

The trees are not dead,—there is life somewhere within them that shows itself on the return of spring.

(b) The incompleteness of man teaches us that the soul is continuous in its life. The oxen and the sheep eat until they are full, then rest as if never to hunger again. Apparently they are perfectly contented. Who ever knew a contented man or a contented woman! We are always,—whoever we are, whatever we have,—longing for something more. If God created within us a desire for something we cannot secure in this life, is it not reasonable to believe that He will satisfy that longing somewhere?

(c) The fact that all men everywhere have a desire for a continued life convinces us that somewhere provision will be made, and that life will be revealed unto us as fully continuous. Would God Almighty have created in man a universal desire for a life beyond this one without somewhere making provision to satisfy that desire? It would not only be illogical but it would be unthinkable that an all-wise Creator would do such a thing.

(d) The Bible teaches us emphatically that the Soul is immortal. We read that "Enoch walked with God and was not, for God took him." We read that Moses and Elijah, centuries after death, came back to have part in the Transfiguration of Christ on the mountain. Where had they been between the time of their death, or translation, as it happened to be in this case, and the time of the transfiguration? Surely, in life somewhere! David declared that his son would not return to him, but that he would at some time go to his son. Christ makes repeated references to the everlasting life, or the eternal life. Pilate said he could find no fault in Christ. The

Centurion said He must be the Son of God. So we can easily believe, from all human reasoning, that Christ's references to another life was beyond question.

2. The fact is that the soul finds its rest only in God; that the soul finds its contentment or satisfaction only in God. There have been beliefs of a kind of immortality for centuries. It is true that the Egyptians had some conception of immortality; also the Greeks, the Persians and the Romans, but all of these great systems of philosophy and theology have only served to keep the light of immortality before man. They have not been able to give a satisfactory answer to that age-long question of Job,—“If a man die, shall he live again?”

Down on my native hills of Tennessee, after working horses all day, it was our custom, after having fed them well at night, to turn them out on the hillside to pasture during the night. In that country storms come quickly and even violently. We did not want our horses to be exposed to the storm. Therefore, whatever the hour of the night, when we heard the rolling of the thunder, which we understood to mean an approaching storm, we would quickly rise from our beds, and with lanterns in hand, go out and bring the horses to shelter. On one such occasion, when seeking for the horses, I went out with an old-fashioned lantern in my hand. It threw a dim light but a few feet ahead and prevented me from stumbling over stones, and stumps, or falling into a ditch. I did not seem to be able to find the horses on this particular night. The thunder is more violent; the lightning is fiercer. I hear the pouring rain in the trees near by. I am about to give up in despair and seek shelter from that storm for myself and leave the horses to the mercy of the ele-

ments. Just then there is a flash of lightning that seems to cover the whole canopy of the heavens. From the brilliant light that this shed over all the surrounding country, I see the horses across a ravine. I hasten to them and take them to shelter. What my little lantern was to me in the darkness of that night, so has been the light shed by all systems of philosophy and religions, until there was a glow of light in the heavens and voices came forth singing, and the announcement was made of the birth of a Babe in Bethlehem's manger,—growing in a natural way to manhood; teaching the greatest lessons the world has ever heard; living the only ideal life; sacrificing for the good of humanity on the Cross; overturning death at the resurrection,—He has spoken to us the only message of satisfaction,—“I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”

3. In this last statement on the Cross, Christ makes a personal gift to God of His body and soul,—“Into Thy hands I commend my spirit.” That is exactly what man must do to be saved. He must personally and individually consign his body and spirit to Christ. It is a fine thing to have good parents, but their goodness cannot save the children. It is a beautiful thing to have a good wife, but her faithfulness will not answer for the faith of her husband. The whole fact in the matter is, We ourselves personally have our souls to give. We either give them to God or we give them to the Devil. If we give our souls to God, He will save them, for He has made wonderful provision for us. If we deliberately give our souls to the Devil, we mar this life and jeopardize all joy in another life. The fact is that we ourselves, our children, our

neighbors, are giving our souls to God or to the Devil this very night. The only thing worth while in this life is to have a definite knowledge as to who possesses our souls. We may gain wealth, reputation, fame, pleasure,—all that the world has to offer. In the end, the only thing that counts is, To whom have we consigned our souls?

Edith Cavell, the English nurse, realizing that she was to be executed the next day, said, "To any one who stands as I stand, nothing else counts but one's faith in God."

4. His resignation was for our exaltation. He is our example. He resigned His will to God. He said, "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me." Can we follow Him in this? He worked. He said, "My father worketh hitherto and I work." Are we following Him in this? He regularly attended the services in the Church. We read, "As was His custom, he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day and taught the Scriptures." Are we following Him in this?

Even if we resign our spirits to God, there may be some things we cannot understand, but "all things work together for good to them that love God."

A mother has a beautiful bouquet of roses presented to her. After the roses are put upon the table and admired by herself and her two little girls, the little girls run away to play. When they return, they find that their mother had stripped the petals from the roses, put them into a dish and poured some kind of liquid over them. They watch her with astonishment and amazement. The mother continues to work without explaining. The rose leaves are made into a pulp. The pulp is made into beads. The beads are placed on two strings. When all is done, she calls her girls to her side and gives each a

necklace made out of the rose leaves. The fragrance of the rose has been preserved. Then she explains the matter to them saying, "If the roses had been left on the table, in a day or two they would have withered and been useless and without fragrance." By crushing them, she had preserved them for service and retained the fragrance in the necklace for her little girls. We may be crushed under the burdens of life, but if our spirits are resigned, God's grace is fitting us for a jewel in His crown, and we will be able to say with Dwight L. Moody as he was passing away, "Earth is receding; heaven is approaching."

THE END

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